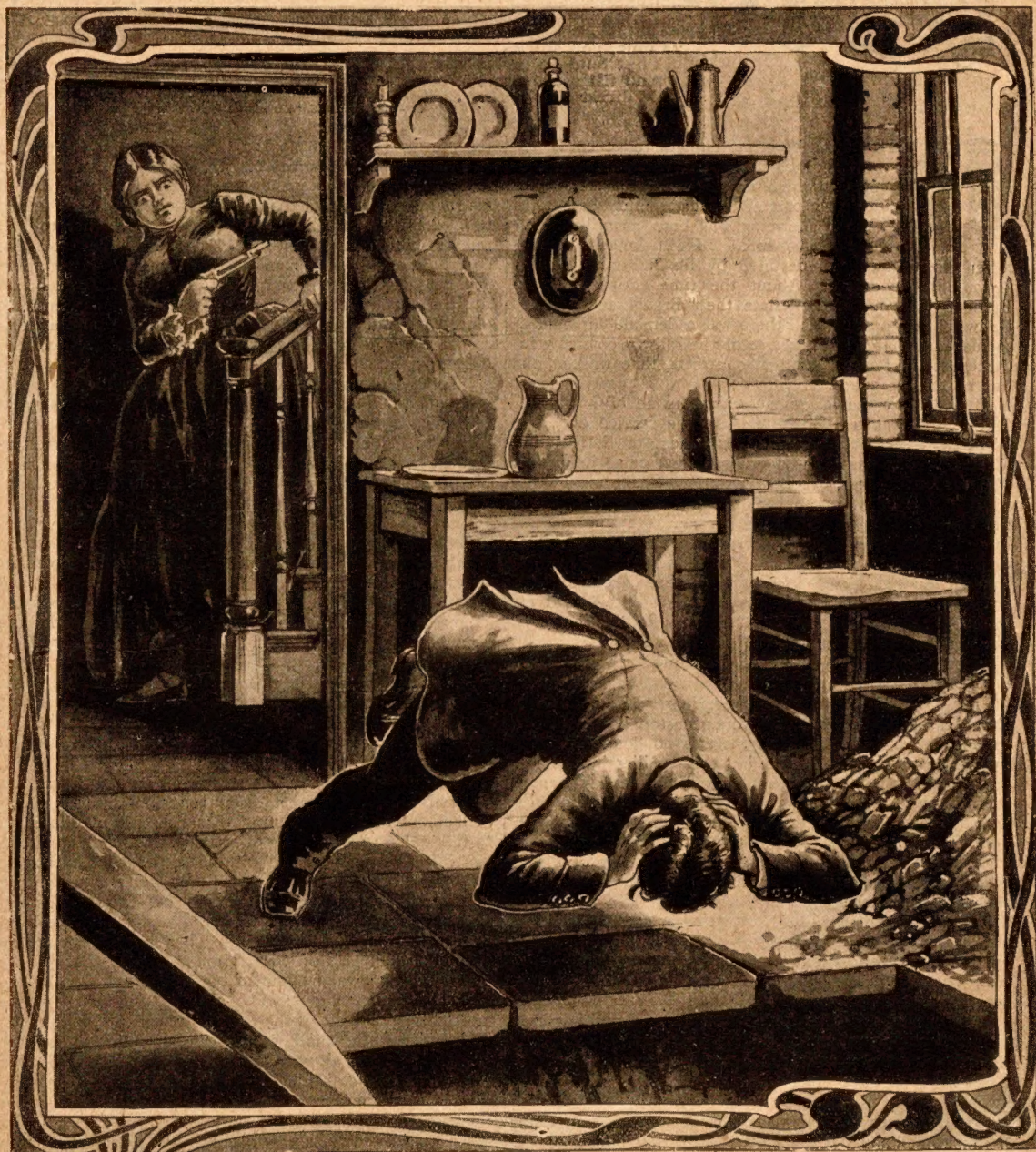


POLICE BUDGET EDITION EDITED BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT ONE PENNY



THE MURDER OF O'CONNOR BY THE MANNINGS.



"Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here;
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty. . . ."

—SHAKESPEARE, "Macbeth," Act I, Scene 5.

THE annals of crime contain few records as brutal or as bloodthirsty as that of the murder which we are about to relate. In the early part of the last century Frederick George Manning was born near Taunton, in Somersetshire. He belonged to the lower classes and was destined by his father to be an agricultural labourer. About the time, however, that Frederick reached man's estate the "Bristol and Exeter Railway" was opened, and there was a demand for hands, so Manning entered the service of the railway company in the capacity of porter; and in course of time worked his way up to be a guard.

In 1847 he met a woman of the name of Maria de Roux, who was a waiting maid in the service of Lady Blantyre, daughter of the then Duchess of Sutherland. Maria de Roux was of Swiss origin, as her name indicates. She was a stout, florid woman of a most sensual and vulgarly alluring type of beauty. Her cheeks were large and full, her chin small and round, mouth small with thick, loose lips of a deep red colour. Indeed, much the type of woman that one sees on the Cannabière, at Marseilles among the lowest class of the fishwives there. But it must not be imagined that De Roux was as unintellectual as the fish vendors of the South of France; on the contrary, she was gifted with a diabolical cunning which if properly directed might have led her to moderate success in any line of commercial enterprise.

It was while she was in the service of Lady Blantyre that Maria de Roux met a young custom-house officer called Patrick O'Connor, and there is no doubt that she carried on a liaison with him; but this familiar intercourse was interrupted in 1847, when, as we have seen, she met the railway guard Manning. Manning rapidly fell in love with De Roux, and shortly after their meeting they were married. There must have been something peculiar in Manning which attracted the florid beauty, for it is not often that a woman marries a man so singularly like herself in all his characteristics. With the sole exception that Manning had thin lips, he was the male counterpart of his partner for life. He was not gifted, however, with the same intellect, and it can be readily understood that his training as porter and guard had done little to develop any brain that he might have had.

Persons of this type have one idea of happiness—to keep a public-house, and as soon as he was married he left the railway employ and took a small tavern at Taunton. They seem to have done fairly well in the public-house business, for in March, 1849, the couple left Taunton and retired from active employment, coming up to London and taking a small house at 3, Miniver Place, Bermondsey.

As soon as they were settled down in London, Maria Manning returned to her former lover, Patrick O'Connor, and renewed the intimacy which had been broken off for

the previous eighteen months. She did not actually leave her husband, but with his full consent used to visit O'Connor, and often spent the greater part of the day in his room when he was absent. The access which she had to O'Connor's chambers and papers enabled her to find out accurately his financial position, and she soon discovered that he was a man of some property. Everything goes to show that Maria rapidly tired of her coarse, brutal husband, and yearned for the wealthy young customs officer, still she was tied to Manning for life, and as long as she could do what she wanted she did not feel inclined to murder him.

Though they had enough to live upon, the Mannings were not really well off, and were not in the least averse to increasing their income by letting a couple of their rooms to lodgers. Some time in June a young medical student named Massey, who was studying at Guy's Hospital, took their lodgings, and the Mannings did not take long to get on fairly familiar terms with him.

One day when Massey was at home Manning asked him to come down to his dining-room and smoke a pipe. The medical student was lonely and glad of the company of even an ex-railway guard, so he came downstairs and spent the evening with his landlord and landlady. In the course of conversation the name of O'Connor cropped up, and Manning informed Massey that the customs gauger had about £20,000 invested in various funds, and added that he had made a will in favour of his wife, Maria. Mrs. Manning was present at the time this statement was made, and there can be no doubt that it was then that the diabolical plan entered her head of obtaining possession of the £20,000 as soon as possible.

A few days later Massey was again invited downstairs, and this time the subject of conversation was the effects of laudanum and chloroform. Among other questions put to the embryo medico was one asking whether it would be possible to stupefy a man with these drugs sufficiently to force him to sign a cheque for £500, which sum Manning laughingly declared he wanted to get from O'Connor. Massey was a little free with his learning, and explained why it would not be possible. Then having obtained a thirst for medical knowledge, Manning asked what was the most vital spot in the human body, and was told by the medical student that possibly the jugular vein was the most dangerous part of the body to injure. This question was followed by another asking where the seat of the human brain was situated, and Massey at once pointed it out. One cannot blame the young student for being unsuspicious at these questions, for the laity often ask similar questions of the medical students out of pure curiosity, but when this interrogation was concluded by a demand to know what he thought would be the end of a murderer and whether death by hanging was painful, one cannot understand how it was that Massey did not scent danger. On

another occasion Manning asked his lodger if he had ever discharged an air gun, and whether it made a noise or not.

Having got the information which they wanted, the Mannings quickly formulated their plot, and the trace of Mrs. Manning's cunning is trailed all over it. Naturally the pair of fiends did not want to have anybody in the house, since they might have to leave hurriedly, and accordingly they gave their lodger notice to leave. Massey at first objected, but eventually did find other apartments in the neighbourhood and removed his property there on the 28th of July.

While the two ghouls were waiting for their lodger to quit his apartments they commenced making preparations for gaining possession of O'Connor's property. On the 23rd of July Manning went to a builder named Wells and asked him to sell him a bushel of lime.

"What do you want it for?" asked Wells.

"To destroy a quantity of slugs in my back garden," replied Manning.



The diabolical plan entered her head.

"Then you want quicklime," continued the builder. "Ordinary lime would not do."

"What is the quickest lime you have got?" was the prospective murderer's next question.

"Oh, this kind," said Wells. So Manning ordered that a bushel of that species of lime should be sent to 3, Miniver Place, where it was received and paid for by Mrs. Manning.

Two days later Manning went to an ironmonger's shop in King William Street, close to London Bridge, and asked the shopman to show him several crowbars. The tradesman did so, but none of them were heavy enough for the purpose to which Manning proposed to put the instrument, and accordingly he gave orders that a special one should be forged for him, remarking at the time that he did not want one that was too long, but that it must be very substantial, as he had a very heavy piece of work to do with it. The crowbar was forged to his order, and it was finished on July 28 and sent off to the Mannings' house. As it happened, as the man was taking the crowbar to Miniver Place, he was met by Manning, who was taking an afternoon walk.

Manning was shocked at seeing his shining crowbar being carried uncovered through the streets, and told the man that it would spoil his newly-acquired property. The messenger remonstrated, and said that it was not usual to enclose articles of that sort in wrappers; but Manning insisted, and took the man to a shop in Tooley Street, where he purchased a quantity of paper and had the implement wrapped up so that it looked like a walking-stick or an umbrella. Then the messenger was sent on to Bermondsey with the bar, and told to deliver it to Mrs. Manning, who would pay him for it. He did so; but the virago haggled a good deal about the price of the article, which was to be the means of her obtaining possession of £20,000. Eventually she did pay for it, and took it indoors and secreted it in the kitchen cupboard.

On that day Massey left, and the couple were left alone in the house, for the woman did all the house work, with the occasional help of a charwoman.

For ten days the precious pair consulted as to the best way to gain their end, and on the morning of August 8 Mrs. Manning went out and bought a shovel. She told the ironmonger that she did not mind if the handle was short or long, but that the implement must be very strong and of the best quality. She was supplied with the shovel, which was sent to Miniver Place that very morning. Then everything being ready for the sacrifice to the God of Mammon, the only thing required was the victim.

To ensure this, Mrs. Manning sat down and wrote the following letter to her former lover:

"Wednesday Morning.

"DEAR O'CONNOR,—We shall be happy to see you to dine with us to-day at half-past five.—Yours affectionately,

"MARIA MANNING."

This invitation, which cannot help reminding us of the celebrated ditty of Mrs. Bond, "Dilly, Dilly, come and be killed," was despatched at three o'clock on the same afternoon, addressed to O'Connor at the London Docks, where he was then working as gauger. It did not reach O'Connor's house, however, till the next day, when it was brought to the victim's residence by a porter from the Dock Office.

On the evening of the 8th, however, O'Connor determined to visit the Mannings of his own accord, and took with him a friend, Mr. Walsh, and the two sat at Miniver Place, smoking, but not drinking, till midnight, when they went home together.

We now come to August 9, 1849, a Thursday, the last day that Patrick O'Connor was seen alive. We know that the letter from Maria Manning was sent to his house early on that morning by the Dock Officials. Patrick O'Connor left his house in Greenwood Street, Mile End, at half-past seven in the morning, and reached the London Docks at eight o'clock, the usual time for him to commence work. He signed the book which is kept in the Customs office, and remained in the docks till shortly after four in the afternoon, when he entered his name in the departure-book.

At a quarter to five that evening, he was seen by two of his friends near London Bridge, and showed to one or both of them a letter inviting him to dinner. The letter was signed "Maria" simply, and therefore was not the one which was despatched on the previous day. He chatted to his friends for a moment or two, and then went on his way. At about five o'clock he was seen in Weston Street, which is quite close to Miniver Place, and later again was seen on London Bridge, apparently hesitating which way he should go. That was the last time he was seen alive, for the road he determined on was the path that led to death.

While O'Connor was either at Miniver Place, or on his way there, on August 9, Mrs. Manning went to his rooms in Greenwood Street, arriving there at about a quarter to six and remaining for an hour. Manning himself was at his own house that evening, for he was seen smoking and chatting on the wall of his back premises

about a quarter-past seven. He remained for about twenty minutes, and then suddenly jumped down, saying that he had an important engagement to keep.

On August 10 Mrs. Manning again went to O'Connor's rooms at a quarter to six in the evening, and stayed there for some considerable time. Her visit did not excite suspicion, for she was accustomed to go there whenever she liked. The people of the house, however, noticed that she looked nervous and pale. On the following day (Saturday) Mrs. Manning engaged a girl to come and do some cleaning in the house, and among other duties set her to scrub out the front and back kitchens, and to scour a basket, which had recently contained lime. While this was going on, Mr. Manning went to the Stock Exchange, and there saw a broker, to whom he sold twenty Eastern Counties Shares for £119. These shares were the property of O'Connor, and for the nonce Manning assumed his friend's name.

When O'Connor did not put in an appearance at his duties

that he was going out of town and should not be returning for some little time. Bainbridge had a look at the goods, and purchased them, promising to send for them at five o'clock on the following morning. Then Manning agreed to lodge with the dealer for a fortnight, and sent a servant to Miniver Place to tell his wife to come to the lodgings to him.

He was rather astonished to learn that his loving spouse had fled from the house in a cab, taking with her all the most valuable of the papers. Naturally, he was upset at this, and told Bainbridge, who suggested that, as the furniture was not to be removed till the following morning, Manning should sleep in the house, for security's sake. To this very reasonable proposition, Manning replied that he would not sleep again in that house for twenty pounds.

While Manning was doing this, what was his wife doing? Having seen her husband off to Bainbridge's to secure his lodgings, she packed up a large quantity of



"WHAT IS THE QUICKEST LIME YOU HAVE GOT?"

on Friday or Saturday, his friends naturally became anxious and on Sunday, the 12th, called at his lodgings, and were surprised to learn that he had not been home since the Thursday. The landlady at Greenwood Street told them that Mrs. Manning was a great friend of his, and proposed that they should go round and see her. This they did, and were told that neither of the Mannings had seen him since Wednesday evening, when he had dined with them in company with Mr. Walsh. The woman added that she had expected him to dinner on the Thursday, but that he had not come, and she had called at his residence to inquire for him.

This statement did not satisfy Mr. Walsh, and he consulted with Mr. Flynn, a relative of the murdered man, who went to Miniver Place on the 13th, and saw Mrs. Manning. She repeated her former declaration that O'Connor had not been with her on the 9th. Manning never put in an appearance at these interviews. That same day Manning went to a furniture dealer, named Bainbridge, and offered to sell him all his furniture for £13, saying

clothes which she did not want in a couple of boxes, and valuable property which she did require in another pair of boxes, and called a cab from the nearest cabstand. When the vehicle was loaded, she directed the man to drive her to the South Eastern Railway station, now known as Charing Cross, and on the way purchased some cards at a stationer's shop, and wrote on them the direction:

"Mrs. Smith, Passenger to Paris."

When she reached the station, she ordered the porter to nail the cards on two of the boxes, which she left in the cloak-room. Then she directed the cabman to drive her to Euston, and there took train for Newcastle, where she engaged lodgings in the name of Mrs. Smith.

Leaving "Mrs. Smith" safely reposing at Newcastle, we will continue to follow Manning's movements. On the 15th, two days after he had taken lodgings for a fortnight with Bainbridge, the ex-guard went out in a cab, and as soon as he had got sufficiently far away from Bermondsey,

told the man to drive him to Waterloo Station. From there he went to Southampton, and crossed to Jersey by the packet-boat, where he remained for some time.

It was rather a surprise to the landlord of Miniver Place when he paid a chance visit to the Mannings on the very day on which the furniture had been removed, and found his house empty. He had received no notice whatsoever, and could not understand the matter at all. He made inquiries in the neighbourhood, and then communicated with the police, who had then heard of the mysterious disappearance of Patrick O'Connor. A day or two was lost in making inquiries, and then the police searched the house. In the meantime they had learned that Manning was lodging with the furniture dealer, and when on the morning of the 17th Manning went to Waterloo, a sergeant of the detective force was detailed to shadow him; for though at that time there was nothing to connect him with the disappearance of his wife's lover, the police felt that it was wise to be on the safe side, and not lose

them to believe that there was some reason for those flags being hidden. Accordingly, they determined to raise them and see what was below.

This was done, and then it became evident that the earth had been freshly disturbed, and there were distinct traces of lime showing on the top of the soil. A shovel was fetched, and the police began to dig. Four feet below the surface they came on a bed of lime, which smelt horribly, and underneath the lime they found the body of a man in an advanced stage of decomposition. The corpse was naked, and the legs had been bound back to the haunches with cord, so as to compress the body into as small a space as possible, while the arms were crossed on the breast and tied there.

It was merely a presumption, of course, that this was the missing O'Connor, but as the body had certainly no business to be buried there it was taken to the mortuary, and an inquest held on it in due course. At the same time, it was obvious that it had not long been buried,



MANNING WAS SHOCKED AT SEEING HIS SHINING CROWBAR.

sight of anybody who might possibly be able to throw light on the subject.

The very day that Manning fled to Jersey, the police entered No. 3, Miniver Place, and began to search the house. A careful scrutiny of the premises gave no indication of the committal of a crime there, but at last one sharp constable noticed that the cement around certain of the flags with which the back kitchen was paved was of a different colour to that which fastened down the others, and, trying the strange cement with his knife, found that in places it was still soft. Furthermore, he observed that dust had been carefully swept into the crevices of the floor, although the room bore ample evidence of having been carefully scrubbed. An examination of the front kitchen also revealed the fact that it had been washed, apparently at the same time, but the dust had not been swept into any of the interstices between the stones. Then the party of police returned to the back kitchen again, and saw that the dust only surrounded five flags, while it did not cover any of the other paving-stones. This led

and therefore a warrant was issued for the arrest of the Mannings.

The medical examination of the remains showed that the unfortunate man had been shot through the back of the head at the very spot which Massey had indicated to his landlord as that where the seat of the vital functions was situated, and also the skull had been crushed in with some heavy instrument. An inspection of the mouth revealed the fact that the deceased had worn false teeth, and these teeth were circulated among all the dentists in London. At last one dentist presented himself before the magistrates, and swore an affidavit to the effect that the teeth had been made by him for a gauger in the Custom House of the name of O'Connor. He knew the teeth, for he was in the habit of marking every set that he sent out with a distinctive number, and the number on the teeth corresponded with that on the set supplied to O'Connor. Furthermore, he produced the plaster cast from which O'Connor's teeth had been made, and it was shown that the denture fitted it exactly.

There was then no reasonable doubt that one or both of the Mannings had done their friend to death; but on the premises nothing was found to show with what the deed had been committed. No letters, no clothes, no instrument with which the skull could have been fractured, were discovered, and how the Mannings had disposed of their victim's property was a mystery.

The police were not long in laying their hands on the Mannings. The cabman who had driven the woman to Charing Cross and thence to Euston was soon to the fore, and he gave an account of what had been done on the day. The boxes which had been left at the station were recovered, and were found to contain Mrs. Manning's old clothes, and nothing else, but the name on them gave a clue to the cognomen under which she was passing. There was then no difficulty in catching the murderess, and she was arrested on August 21, 1849, at Edinburgh, to which town she had retreated from Newcastle as soon as she heard that a body had been unearthed in her house. When



Mrs. Manning bought a shovel.

charged with the murder, she made no denial, and gave up her keys as soon as she was asked for them. Among her possessions, and on her person, were found seventy-three sovereigns, a bank-note for fifty pounds, a number of £10 notes, a £5 note paid to her husband by the stockbroker to whom he sold O'Connor's scrip, and a quantity of shares in the Sambre and Meuse Railway Company, and other securities which were known to have been the property of the murdered man.

Six days later Manning was arrested at Jersey. He stated that he had only then seen the account of the finding of a body at his house, and was about to go to London to explain the matter. However, he said that he would give an account of the affair then and there. According to him the crime was committed not by him but by his wife, and he declared that he would swear to that in the presence of a lawyer and a clergyman. The deed was done as follows: His wife asked O'Connor to dinner, and while they were going downstairs after the meal she put her arm round his neck and shot him in the head. He was much alarmed at what she had done, and did not like to give his

beloved wife up to justice, so promised to keep the secret if she would go away and leave him for ever. She agreed, and then they took the corpse down into the kitchen, where he had fortunately some lime for killing slugs, and the pair dug a grave under the floor of the back kitchen and buried the poor gauger. He did not like to live in the house after the tragedy, and so left and went to Bainbridge's to wait until the next boat sailed for Jersey.

All this sounded very plausible and might have availed Manning if there had not been some discrepancies in the story. In the first place no explanation was forthcoming as to how the injuries to the skull were received, nor did he say where the slugs which he wished to destroy were to be found, since his back garden was paved all over.

Then Mrs. Manning had also had a word to say to the police, and her story differed in toto from that told by her husband. Her version of the matter was that she had long loved O'Connor and would not hurt a hair of his head. She was talking to her lover and possibly he was a little more amorous than he should be, when her husband came into the room. His jealousy was aroused and he fired at O'Connor and shot him dead. No mention was made by Mrs. Manning of the part that the crowbar played on the fatal night.

The pair were brought before the magistrates and committed for trial, and on the 25th of October, 1849, took their places in the dock at the Old Bailey, charged with murdering Patrick O'Connor. As soon as Manning entered the dock he walked right up to the far end of it. A moment later Mrs. Manning was brought into the court. She selected the opposite end of the dock to that at which her husband stood, and did not even cast a glance at him throughout the whole of the proceedings. Manning was very nervous, but his wife was like stone. True, she had lost her colour and was as cold as a statue, but she never showed the slightest feeling or interest in the trial till she was found guilty by the jury.

The facts as we now know them were brought before the court by the various witnesses, and the jury did not take long to make up their minds. A verdict of guilty was returned, and the prisoners were asked if they had anything to say before sentence of death was passed on them according to law. Manning said nothing, but Mrs. Manning burst out into an impassioned address to the court. She said that her husband had ruined her life, and now was bringing her to the scaffold because he was not allowed to open his mouth to save her or to give evidence on her behalf. She loved O'Connor and would not have hurt him at all. If she was sent to the scaffold it would be a judicial murder. "If my husband," she concluded, "chose in a fit of jealousy and madness to kill my dear friend O'Connor, I cannot see why I should be punished for it!"

As soon as she had finished speaking Mr. Justice Cresswell, before whom the case had been tried, proceeded to pass sentence to die. He had only spoken his first few words when the female convict commenced a second appeal for justice and protested against the verdict found against her, declaring that her only fault had been her desire to screen her husband, as a good wife should do. The warders managed to silence her with great difficulty, and the judge finished the awful formula which consigns living persons to the tomb. Manning listened to the dreadful sentence with absolute indifference; indeed, he did not seem to realise his position, and when the judge had concluded he bowed simply to the court and walked down the steps leading to the cells below the Old Bailey. Not so his wife. She burst out into a third address to the court, telling the jurors that her blood would be on their heads and that they would live to repent having sent an innocent woman to the gallows. The warders attempted to stem the torrent of her words, but she would not be silent. They then tried to remove her from the dock, but she clung to the spikes which surround the dock, shrieking and cursing, and it took the united strength of four men

to tear her from her position and hurry her to the condemned cell. The judge told the jury that he agreed perfectly well with their verdict, remarking that in his opinion a case had never been so clearly proved before. He then excused them from further service for six years.

Strange as it may appear, efforts were made to save these two horrible miscreants from the fate which they so richly deserved, and petitions were sent to the Home Secretary begging him to advise Queen Victoria to exercise her Royal prerogative of mercy in the case of Mrs. Manning at least, but after a consultation with the judge the Home Secretary declined to consider the case any further, and said that the law must take its course. This even did not dismay the supporters of Mrs. Manning. Since Queen Victoria had come to the throne no women had

chapel, and had heard the condemned sermon preached especially for their benefit, while close beside them were placed the coffins so soon to contain all that would remain on earth of the unhappy creatures.

Shortly before eight o'clock in the morning the gao! bell began to toll, and the enormous crowd which waited outside the prison-door manifested its impatience. Then the hangman stepped out on to the scaffold and cast a last look round to see that everything was in proper order. Returning, he intimated to the sheriffs and officials that all was ready, and they proceeded to the cell occupied by the male prisoner first. He was asked if he had anything to say before he was led to execution, and he merely bowed and said nothing. He was quickly pinioned, his arms being strapped behind his back, and not, as is now the custom, in front of his stomach. He was then led to the Press Room, and there left in charge of four warders, while the hangman went to Mrs. Manning's cell to perform



FREDERICK GEORGE MANNING.

MARIA MANNING.

been brought to the fatal tree, and it was hoped that sentiment might save the villainous Maria Manning from the ignominious death which she so well merited. One petition did actually reach the Queen, but she refused to act without the advice of her responsible minister, and when she had had an interview with him she agreed that it was not a case where the slightest pity could be shown.

When told that all petitions to save her neck had failed Mrs. Manning broke out into passionate invectives against those who had condemned her, and declared that she was being murdered out of spite. The chaplain tried to quiet her, and eventually managed to do so. For some time Mrs. Manning was most attentive to the counsels of the good chaplain, then the vanity inherent in the female breast gained the ascendancy, and she began to consider in what toilette she should make her last appearance in the world.

At last the morning of the 13th of November dawned, the morning appointed for the execution of the two greatest ruffians that the world has ever seen. On the day previous both miscreants had been present in the gao!

the same office for her. She resisted a little at first, but, on the chaplain remonstrating with her, ceased struggling and allowed herself to be pinioned. In her case the hands were not fastened behind the back. She was then led to the Press Room, where she saw her husband ready for the scaffold. She barely acknowledged his salute, and was placed on his right hand. The procession was next formed. In front walked a number of warders, and then the chaplain, who commenced reading the Burial Service. After him came the two malefactors, and close on their heels walked the hangman and his assistant. It was noticed that the hangman carried two white caps in his pocket, and from time to time he kept nervously fingering them and separating the tops from one another. Behind the last officers of the law walked the sheriffs and the governor of Horsemonger Lane Gao!, and a number of warders, with the doctor, closed the mournful procession.

Fearful lest the prisoners should require to be carried to the place of execution, two warders marched on each side of the culprits, but their assistance was not really

required, though the woman stumbled a little when mounting the steps of the scaffold.

When the two brutal murderers stepped on to the scaffold, they were greeted with howls of execration. It was then seen what preparations Mrs. Manning had made for her exit from the world. She was dressed in a new robe of black satin, with low collar and with frills round her wrist. The pair at once took their places beneath the awful black beam, and the executioner came forward with the caps in his hands, while the assistant secured the feet of the culprits. An additional strap passing round the legs just below the knees was used in the case of Mrs. Manning to secure her skirt.

Again the sheriff asked if the condemned had anything to say, and they both replied that they had not. The caps were drawn over their faces, and the nooses



The flags were raised.

placed around their necks. Then, while the chaplain continued the words of the Burial Service, "In the midst of life we are in death. In whom, then, shall we trust but in Thee, O Lord?" the bolt was drawn, and the two wretched creatures were launched into eternity. Manning died instantaneously, but his wife was convulsed for several seconds before her soul left her body. The immense concourse of people greeted the deaths of these two wretches with ringing cheers. After hanging the customary time, their bodies were cut down and taken into the gaol, and thus forever disappeared from the world.

Even in her death Mrs. Manning injured society. So much did people execrate her memory that no one would wear black satin or many years, and innumerable persons were thrown out of work in consequence.

In this case, the little mistake which leads to conviction, and which the murderer always makes, is well shown. Had the Manning destroyed the false teeth of their victim along with his other property, it is highly probable that the body found in the back kitchen of No. 3, Miniver Place would not have been identified, and the two fiendish murderers would have escaped the fate which they had earned.

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OPENING CHAPTERS IN No. 71.



ARSENIC AS
AGENT AND
ACCUSER.

The POISONINGS by
CHADWICK and BENNISON,
FOR LUST AND GREED.

"The breast may mourn o'er a close link
torn,
And the scalding teardrop roll;
But 'tis better to weep o'er a pulseless
form
Than the wreck of a living soul."

—ELIZA COOK.
"The Tree of Death."



IT is a bright evening of about the middle of April, 1850. The showers have been falling in true seasonable style during the day, but now the sun is reflected with a warm, yellow light from the thousands of windows belonging to the great, tall houses for which the fair town of Edinburgh is notorious, and the sky is very blue away over Arthur's Seat, and above the huge buildings which seem erected for the purpose of shutting out the light of day from the narrower streets.

At a window of a house in Stead's Place, Leith Walk, in the environs of Scotland's capital, is seated a young woman. Her face is very pale, and as she keeps her eyes fixed upon the pathway below, looking between the pots of crocuses and hyacinths, which are prettily displayed upon the window-sill, there is a sad expression in her countenance, and she is evidently awaiting someone's arrival with anxiety.

Her name is Jean Bennison, formerly residing at Story Street, Paisley, with her father, Mr. Hamilton, and her sister. She has been married to William Bennison for some years, but the union has been far from a happy one. Her husband, who is a mechanic in the ironworks, bestows upon her little attention, for he is at work early, and when he finishes, his mind is so wrapped up in the religious calls with the Methodists—he taking an active part in their chapel services and meetings—that he rarely finds time to devote much attention to the poor delicate little wife who spends her days and evenings in solitude. People do say, too, that William Bennison has other attractions than the prayer meetings; that he pays rather more attention to Margaret Robertson than is considered decent amongst the straight-laced community of the Scottish capital. And Jean Bennison hears the talk about her husband, and is jealous. But the man has such a plausible way, and such a ready answer for the accusations against him that she must needs live on in miserable suspense, broken in spirit, and with nothing to make life worth living for. The man she has loved has deserted her, and wedded himself to religion, praying, and singing hymns, and spending all his time in the society of the elders and their godly flock.

On this particular evening Jean is more down-hearted than usual, and when her husband returns home from work she is scarcely cheered when he tells her that he will not go to the meeting that night. Not that he is concerned about her loneliness. It is solely from a selfish motive. He does not feel well, so he will go to bed early. But he is more attentive to his pale-faced wife than usual, and will not disturb her to get the evening meal ready. After a wash, he will do it himself. So he prepares the humble repast, which consists but of the national favourite dish of porridge and potatoes. No, he has no inclination to

eat. He is out of sorts. So the little woman partakes sparingly of the food, and William Bennison, leaving her at her meal, retires to bed.

It is about three o'clock in the morning (a Saturday) when the frail creature lying beside her husband awakens him from his heavy sleep. She has suffered agonies during the night, but, with all her fortitude, can bear it no longer. "William—William," she cries, "for God's sake get up and fetch the doctor! I feel as if I shall die. Get me water, William—quick! quick!"

As the man reluctantly turns out of bed, and gets a light, it reveals the poor woman's face as pallid as death and the features drawn up in agony.

"Why, what is the matter with you, lassie?" asks her husband, with affected concern. But there is a scowl upon his face and a devilish look in his eyes. He gets the suffering woman drink, and she falls back exhausted upon the pillow, and lies in a semi-conscious state for long periods, which are broken by attacks of pains in the abdomen and breasts of the most excruciating agony. And the man reclines sullenly silent beside the suffering woman.

In the morning the serious symptoms are alarmingly increased, and William Bennison is unable to leave his wife to go to work; and after many entreaties he goes for the doctor. But the doctor does not come, and again the wife implores, and the husband leaves her a second time, and goes to Macdonald's, the chemist's, and gets a draught. Still there is no relief, and some women come in to attend to the suffering woman, whilst Bennison goes to inform his wife's sister, Mrs. Ellen Glas, who goes to the house immediately.

"Good heaven! my sister's dying!" she exclaims directly she sees her. She asks whether a doctor has seen her, and is told that Mr. Gelespie, a surgeon, has had the condition explained, and declares that he can do nothing for her.

"She will soon have gone to glory—safe in the arms of Jesus!" exclaims Bennison, with his hands clasped and his eyes turned heavenwards. Then, turning to one of the



His eyes turned heavenwards.

women, he, changing the tone of his voice to a less sanctimonious tone, says, "You had better look out the dead-clothes, hadn't you? And, by the bye, we shall want some black-edged notepaper and envelopes. Will you get some?"

But the woman looks horrified, and replies scornfully, "Hush, man! There is time enough for all that. Give

your poor wife words of comfort, if you can, whilst the poor creature lives!"

And the sufferer looks towards him pleadingly, and there is a strange expression in her eyes, which he avoids. He paces the room restlessly, and avoids the bedside, never addressing a word of comfort to the dying woman, and in the evening goes to the house of Margaret Robertson to sleep.

The next morning the woman is dead. The sister, broken down with grief, declares to Bennison that the body must be opened, but, with his sanctimonious expression and uplifted eyes, he says, "It is the will of God, and why—why should I go to the expense of such a thing? It is too dreadful to think of cutting the poor thing's body about."

So the corpse is interred, for there was not much difficulty in those days in getting the necessary certificate, when the symptoms of illness and manner of death are described by those present.

as on 15th of November, 1838, he, at Tavanagh, near Portadown, in Ireland, married Mary Mullen, and while she was alive he, on the 15th of December, 1839, entered into a matrimonial connection with Jean Hamilton (now deceased), who resided in Storey Street, Paisley; and, 2nd, of murder, in so far as on the 12th or 13th day of April last, he, within the house situated in Stead's Place, Leith Walk, near Edinburgh, wilfully, wickedly, and feloniously, and with intent to murder, mixed with some porridge or oatmeal a quantity of arsenic; and that his wife, Jean Hamilton, having partaken of the same, did immediately become ill, and, after lingering in a state of suffering, died about the second or third day thereafter."

Many startling things were revealed at the trial, and there was little doubt but that he murdered his first wife after he had gone through the form of marriage with number two, for she died suddenly at Airdrie, under precisely the



GUIDING THE DYING MAN'S HAND.

But the women talk, and the sister, Ellen Glas, is frantic. Then, on the evening before the death a dog belonging to a lame man who lives in the same building is found dead in the yard. It is then remembered that Bennison cleared out a stew-pan containing porridge and threw it down at the back of the premises, and that the animal ate of it. It is one of those little links that Providence always finds the opportunity to forge. So the authorities are communicated with, and an order for the exhumation of the corpse is made, whilst William Bennison is arrested on the suspicion of having murdered his wife.

Having discovered that the man had insured her life in societies to the extent of some £11, and that he had received 1s. from each of his mates towards the expenses, that the body contained arsenic, and a few other matters which pointed conclusively to his guilt, he was fully committed to take his trial.

To the surprise of everybody, he was charged upon two counts, and the case created great excitement.

The prisoner appeared before the Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Moncrieff, and Lord Ivory, and the indictment ran as follows:

"William Bennison, accused, 1st, of bigamy, in so far

same conditions, and was hurried to her grave without suspicion having fallen upon the wretched hypocrite, who, under the cloak of religion, hatched these atrocious crimes.

The jury found him guilty on both counts, and he was sentenced to death, the execution taking place in Edinburgh on August 16, 1850, that being the first that had taken place since the year 1844. Murdock, from Glasgow, was the executioner, and the scene was most impressive. It took place at 8 a.m., and thousands of people from distant parts of the country came to see the arch-villain sent to his doom. Mr. Hay, his great friend and preacher at the Methodist chapel, attended him to the scaffold, and they prayed together as fervently when Bennison was upon the brink of the grave as he did before and after the murder. Bailies Law and Fyfe, the magistrates, had the conduct of the execution, and wore their official robes, and carried white rods, preceded by the city officers, bearing the halberds. The condemned man wore a frock-coat, coloured waistcoat and scarf. He was cool, but deathly pale, and surveyed the surroundings with great curiosity, glancing up at the gallows with a critical eye as he ascended the scaffold with a firm step.

The executioner in removing his neck-cloth did it very roughly, almost savagely, so that Bailie Law had to inter-

pose. It was evident that the man upon this occasion enjoyed his job, and was glad to be instrumental in sending such a vile wretch out of the world.

Having put on the white cap and pulled it down over the unhappy man's face, and thrust a handkerchief into his hand, Bennison then in a somewhat feeble voice murmured, "Is everything ready?" The executioner gruffly answered, "Yes," when the culprit threw the handkerchief from him as a signal for his life to be taken, and in a louder tone exclaiming, "The Lord Jesus have mercy upon my soul!" he disappeared down the trap.

For what appeared to be a considerable time the hanged man struggled, and the rope quivered and swung. The report was that Murdoch had not nicely adjusted it for him, thus giving him a little further time for repentance.

He left a confession with his friend, Mr. Hay, but that gentleman refused to make it public, and people did say that it was because the Methodist worshippers objected to being dragged into print with the late devout member of their flock, who swore before his Maker, his judge, and the jury who gave their verdict, that he was innocent, afterwards confessed his crime to his pastor, and then, after all, died with a lie upon his lips when he declared that he had not been guilty of foul play with the first unfortunate woman whom he married.

William Bennison, poisoner, certainly stands out as a prominent figure in the Scottish annals of crime, and even now old gossips in Edinburgh town will tell the story of the pale-faced girl who was done to death in so dastardly a manner.

Whilst on the subject of arsenic poisoning; which, by the way, was fully entered into in the series of articles upon poisons that appeared in the early issues of FAMOUS CRIMES, we may briefly recall another atrocious murder which was perpetrated in England about the same period, arsenic being the agent employed.

In this instance the motive was that of greed, and not lust, the victim being a helpless old man, who had lived three score years and ten, and whose only misfortune was that he had been thrifty enough to have saved a little money, and had acquired enough property to keep him comfortably for the few remaining years of his life.

The old fellow, whose name was Samuel Tunncliffe, strictly speaking, was a little farmer, of Butterson, in Staffordshire, although the place he rented consisted but of an old tumble-down house, a few acres of land, one cow, a few pigs, and some poultry. His few immediate relations were Ann Tunncliffe, who had married his late brother; Sarah Chadwick, her daughter; and the husband of the latter, William Chadwick, son of a farmer. These three individuals professed a great affection for old Samuel, and they were constantly visiting him, always expressing their surprise that he should lead such a lonely life. At the same time they took an extraordinary interest in the matter of certain deeds relating to the old man's property, which he had promised to leave to Ann Chadwick when he died.

However, there was little need to worry about such an event as that, for his brother had lived until he was 99, and his mother had reached the extraordinary age of 104, whilst he was very hale and hearty, and, although seventy, looked good enough for another five-and-twenty years. After much persuasion, the Chadwicks induced old Samuel to give up his house, bring along his furniture and stock, and take up his abode at Bloore, where they assured him he would be well cared for.

In the meanwhile, the deeds referred to were missing, and the old man was heard to say that he believed "those who would take those deeds would take my life." For a time everything went well, but soon the old fellow began to feel ill, and expressed a desire to return to his home. The Chadwicks would not hear of it, and before long Samuel Tunncliffe became so bad that he had to take to his bed. Quickly getting worse, it was believed that his end had come, nobody expressing this opinion more pointedly than William Chadwick.

The scene in the death-chamber would have made a sensational act in a melodrama. The old fellow sitting in a chair, William Chadwick guiding the dying man's hand with a pen in it, and a deed of assignment upon the table before them awaiting signature. A neighbour, Charles Byatt, standing by ready to witness the document, and the two women, Ann Chadwick and her mother, grouped behind the chair.

But the fates were against them. Samuel Tunncliffe was too far gone to affix his name to the deed, and the pen fell from his limp fingers, his jaw dropped, his eyes glazed, and he fell back dead, with his head upon the pillows at the back of the chair.

There was a speedy funeral at the churchyard of Bloore, and Chadwick raised suspicion by trying to get the property over in a great hurry without the necessary legal instruments. Foul play was suspected, and the proof that Chadwick had purchased arsenic and other drugs warranted the authorities in arresting him on the charge of murder. The body was exhumed, and there the poison was found in large quantities.

He was committed for trial, and found guilty of murder by the coroner's jury.

The complications arising during the trial, and the many incidents implicating the two women, are too numerous to enter into here. For a long time the jury were unable to agree, and had to be directed several times by Mr. Justice Williams before arriving at their verdict four hours and a half after their retirement.

William Chadwick, who, by the bye, was a man standing 6ft. 5in., was found guilty and sentenced to death, protesting that he was innocent, declaring that his wife and her mother were the real culprits. There was such opposition to the carrying out of the sentence that at the eleventh hour the Home Secretary sent a respite, which was immediately followed by the arrest of the two women. Several incidents which had not come to light during the trial were mentioned which seemed to implicate Sarah Chadwick and Ann Tunncliffe seriously, and after examination by the justices they were fully committed for trial.

By this time the case had, as may be supposed, created the profoundest interest, and all was excitement when the Assizes drew near. This was, however, quickly dispelled, for the grand jury threw out the bill, and the women were released, and in due course William Chadwick was executed.

There are many to this day in Staffordshire who believe that it was a conspiracy, and that others ought to have shared the same fate as the man hanged. Anyhow, it was a most diabolical plot, and, as in the case of Bennison, murder was positively proved by the employment of that tell-tale poison, arsenic, which, in unskilful hands, is a sure accuser of foul play.



A Blind Witness.

IN the year 1845, a case was tried before Lord Cockburn, the Scotch judge, at the Glasgow Justiciary Court, where a man was charged with larceny. Strange to say, one of the witnesses was a blind woman, who had such keen perception that she was able to identify a considerable number of articles of furniture and dress solely by the touch. She generally mentioned the colours, and easily distinguished her own from others. She was severely tested by the judge, who at first was inclined to doubt her ability to positively swear to a thing she never had seen, and the defending counsel tried his utmost to cast doubts upon her evidence, but Lord Cockburn said he was quite convinced that the woman was as well able to distinguish her own articles as if she had been blessed with two perfect eyes, and her evidence was the chief means of the prisoner's conviction.

A Mental Specialist's Evidence.

A COMMISSION was issued in the year 1832 to try the question of the sanity of a Miss Baxter, and Sir F. Pollock, for the prosecutor, thus cross-examined Dr. Haslam, the well-known mental specialist, who was one of her witnesses:

- "Is Miss Baxter of sound mind?"
- "I never saw any human being who was of sound mind."
- "That is no answer to my question; is she of sound mind?"
- "I presume the Deity is of sound mind, and He alone."
- "Is that your answer, sir?"
- "I presume the Deity alone is of sound mind."
- "How many years have you been mad-doctor?"
- "About forty."
- "Where did you learn that the Deity was of sound mind?"
- "From my own reflections during the last fourteen years, and from repeated conversations with the best divines in the country."
- "Is Miss Baxter of sound mind?"
- "Competently sound."
- "Is she capable of managing herself and her affairs?"
- "I do not know what affairs she has to manage."
- "How often have you given evidence before Commissioners of Lunacy?"
- "I cannot tell; I don't know."
- "Have you any notion?"
- "Notion is very much like knowledge."
- "Have you any idea?"
- "An idea is a visible perception and a direct recollection."
- "Have you any belief?"
- "I cannot say that I have any belief, for that is a direct recollection."

The oddity of the doctor's gestures made his examination very impressive.



CHAPTER VII.

THE more we think of it the more astonished are we at the truly devilish ingenuity with which man has devised methods for the destruction of those of his fellows whom he may have entirely in his power. The very idea that the victim cannot in any way retaliate seems to have spurred on the savage propensities of man, and when his worst instincts have run riot he has perpetrated horrors of which the brute creation is absolutely incapable. Who ever heard of an animal torturing one of its own species? You may say that members of the cat tribe play with the smaller beasts which they have caught, prior to eating them, but this "playfulness" is never manifested towards another feline, nor is it cruelty shown for the pure sake of cruelty; it has some reason behind it, though at present we are not certain what that reason is. The "higher creation," however, has from time immemorial given vent to its lust for torment solely to gratify the brutal instincts; he has stepped from his high place in the scheme of the universe to pander to inclinations to which the very lowest animals are strangers; he has asserted his superiority by abasing himself.

The means of execution which we propose to consider in this article are those allied to fire. "But," you may say, "you can only burn a man and have done with it." True, the end of all the modes is death, and so it is of every form of execution; but the stages by which this end is reached vary immensely.

It is to Assyrian times that we have to go to find the earliest cases of burning to death. Apparently it was common in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, and of his predecessor, Assur-bani-pal, the "Sardanapalus" of the Greeks, for criminals to be consigned to the flames as punishment. We have a definite record of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego being cast into a furnace because they had disobeyed the commands of the king, and it is distinctly mentioned that in order to mark the sense of his displeasure the ruler ordered that the furnace should be heated "seven times hotter than it was wont," so that it is perfectly reasonable to infer that the Babylonian monarchs not infrequently burnt their convicts. The proceeding was not very inhumane, for in their anxiety to make certain of the death of the condemned, the Assyrians were accustomed to wait until the furnace was literally raging before they consigned their victims to its embraces. Death was, therefore, instantaneous. Indeed, in the case of the execution of Shadrach and his fellows, it is stated that the furnace was so hot that the very breath from it sufficed to kill the soldiers who cast the doomed men into it.

Travelling down the ages, we come to the time of Nero, that monster of iniquity who ruled over Rome. In all his dealings with criminals Nero proved himself entirely dominated by his evil passions, but to none did he show such cruelty as to those who differed from him in religion. In this he was not abnormal, for a careful study of history reveals the unpleasant fact that in the name of religion the very foulest tortments have been inflicted. Indeed, one would be

inclined to think that whatever moral code finds favour in the eyes of man, its adoption may be followed by one of two results. The scheme of morality laid down may be rationally pursued, when, irrespective of the tenets of the creed, it may do a certain amount of good, or it may develop into fanaticism, when both great good and great evil may result. Blinded by the false belief that he alone is possessed of the key to perpetual happiness, the fanatic is intolerant of all who hold contrary opinions, and under the guise of propagating the truth, has recourse to violence. The greater the degree of fanaticism, the more bloodthirsty becomes the mind of the possessed man; and the more horrible are the tortures which he inflicts. It must not be imagined, however, that the fanatic considers that he is merely upholding the right when he torments his opponents; no, he believes that, under the guise of cruelty, he is really doing good to the unfortunate folk who cannot see the truth in the way he views it.

Nero was a thoroughly bad man; on that point all historians are agreed. Like many bad men who do not carry out the tenets of the creed they profess, Nero was blindly intolerant of every other form of religion, and imagining that if he persecuted those whom he regarded as infidels he would purchase from the Roman Pantheon immunity from the punishments he deserved for his own misdeeds, he condemned to the foulest deaths those who fell into his hands. Thus it was that he acquired his reputation for massacring Christians.

With only one of his modes of execution have we to deal here, namely, that of burning. Ordinary means palled on Nero, and he devised a novel method of inflicting the punishment. The unfortunate Christians were kept herded up in pens, like sheep awaiting the coming of the butcher, till some great feast day arrived. Then certain of their number were slain in public by the sword, some were thrown to the beasts in the arena, as we have already described, while for the others a more dreadful fate remained.

As night drew nigh, they were bidden to clothe themselves in all their garments, and were taken out of their prison. Under a strong escort they were marched to the principal thoroughfares of the capital, followed by a band of slaves bearing buckets of pitch and ropes. Along the sides of the chief streets of Rome were pillars set at short intervals. As one of these was reached the cortège was halted, and the prisoner bidden to step forth. Then the victim was rapidly bound to the post, his clothes and draperies being carefully wrapped around him and secured with cords. The slaves with the pitch next advanced and drenched the clothing liberally with the tar, being careful not to let any get on the face, but at the same time seeing that the long hair was plentifully soaked by the inflammable matter. The victim was then left bound, and the procession marched on, to halt at the next pillar. When all the streets had been adorned with these living, tarry statues, it was time for the next stage of the execution to be entered upon. But it took some time for all the prisoners to be attached to their stakes, and we can imagine the terror of anticipation which overcame those who had been trussed up ready for the sacrifice. Every footstep that approached caused a shudder to run through the

rigid frame, for the victim feared that it was the advent of the man with the torch.

At last the signal was given by the bloodthirsty emperor, and throughout the streets ran slaves bearing flaming torches. At each living pillar they stopped for an instant and applied the light. The tar-soaked draperies caught fire, and soon there was arising the dense black smoke of burning pitch. The thick draperies prevented the flames from reaching the bodies immediately, but the poor creatures gradually felt the warmth stealing through the enfolding clothes. Hotter and hotter grew the flesh. Great beads of perspiration stood on the skin. Then the heat began to get intense as the wind caught the fiery pillars. The molten pitch ran down on to the bare feet of the prisoners, scaling off great masses of flesh and causing intense agony. The wicked little tongues of fire ran up to the hair, crowning each one of the martyrs



Preparing Nero's Living Torches.

with a blazing halo. The wind increased and the flames roared; the city was alight with the human torches. Nero was happy.

Now and again agonised shrieks rang out on the night air and answering cries of derision came from the degraded populace assembled to enjoy the spectacle. At last the fire reached the body, and slowly, slowly ate its way to the vitals, the poor martyrs enduring untold torments the while. But the end came at last, and only lifeless masses were left to be devoured by the flames. In the morning beside the pillars were heaps of ashes, and here and there a blackened bone; that was all that was left to tell the tale of the holocaust of the previous evening.

Let us leave Nero and his cruelties and again journey on down the river of Time till we come to the year 1481. We are in Seville, that important town in the South of Spain. We

notice the people hurrying towards the gate of the city, dressed in holiday attire. The garments betoken a public holiday, but the faces and demeanour of the people hardly bear out the supposition that they are bent on enjoyment. The laughter and gaiety, so natural in the Southern nations, is suppressed; each looks distrustfully at his neighbour, uttering fair words with his mouth, but obviously afraid all the while. The whole crowd has the air of the schoolboy who tries to look as if he liked going back to school. The laughter, when it does break out has a hollow ring about it. The professions of friendship are obviously false; the holiday garb has been donned perforce. Occasionally a black-robed priest passes the throng. He is greeted effusively, but the moment his back is turned scowls take the place of smiles on the dusky faces of the Spaniards.

We journey on with the crowd till we pass the gate of the city, and a little beyond it we come to a large open space. In the centre of this is a stone platform, raised some three feet above the ground. Facing this on the western side is a sort of grand stand, hung with rich embroideries, and supplied with cushioned chairs. The centre seat is obviously destined for someone of great importance, for it is raised above its fellows and is more richly apparelled.

A little distance from the stone platform, say some ten yards, strong barricades have been erected to prevent the mob pressing too close to the stage. Stage, did I say? Let it pass. Truly it was a stage on which some of the grimmest tragedies of mediæval Europe were played, though the people of Seville called it the Quemadero, or place of cremation. The stonework of the Quemadero is new—indeed, the mortar looks as if it had but just set. To-day is to witness the "first night" of this open-air theatre.

Each moment the throng grows more dense, until apparently every soul in the capital of Castile has come out to witness the tragedy of the day. If the crowd was sombre as it passed through the streets it is positively mournful now, a great depression having settled down on the vast concourse. What is the reason for this? Briefly, every man distrusts his neighbour. But a few months before, at the instigation of Philip de Berberi, King Ferdinand had applied to the See of Rome for the establishment of an Inquisition possessing full powers in his kingdom. Nominally, Ferdinand was desirous of purging his kingdom from heresy; in reality he was anxious to lay his hands on the gold which the priests assured him would pour into his coffers from the estates confiscated by Holy Church. Isabella, wife of Ferdinand, had begged him not to ask for the Inquisition, but Ferdinand was set on having money and on appearing to be a staunch upholder of the See of Rome, and his wife's prayers were unavailing.

The Inquisition was established in 1480, with Don Inigo Manriquez, Archbishop of Seville, as first Grand Inquisitor. For several months the judges had been busy examining those who had been denounced to them, torturing them and confiscating their goods, and to-day they are to hold the first "auto da fé" in Europe, and to lay the foundation-stone of the fiendish erection which did unlimited harm to Christendom.

There is a movement in the crowd, and we turn our eyes to see what is passing. The silence, which till now has brooded over the assembly, is broken by occasional cheers for Manriquez, but the very applause is half-hearted—it is the greeting of the lamb to the butcher.

Surrounded by his priests and attendants, Inigo Manriquez takes his place on the throne erected for him in the grand stand. He is a tall, well-built ecclesiastic, and his face bears the stamp of a fanatic. It is clear that he is but the tool of those who have really organised the Inquisition, and it is equally clear that he fully believes that he is doing inestimable good to Christendom by upholding the Inquisitors. A man of great personal wealth, stolen riches would never appeal to him; brought up to despise pomp, he but submits to the parade which is made of him because he believes that it enhances the dignity of the creed he blindly adores. Personally, he is kind-hearted, but his bigotry enables him to suppress his better nature and almost by force of circumstances he has become what he is.

A word from him, and silence is proclaimed. Then a marshal reads the Bull from Rome establishing the Inquisition in the kingdom of Ferdinand, and a rescript from the monarch enjoining the civil power to carry out the sentences passed by the clerical courts.

A mournful procession now makes its appearance. Preceded by a civil guard come a string of carts, each one containing a man dressed in a long saffron robe, called a "san benito," and attended by a priest. These are the culprits who have been brought into the open light of day to make a

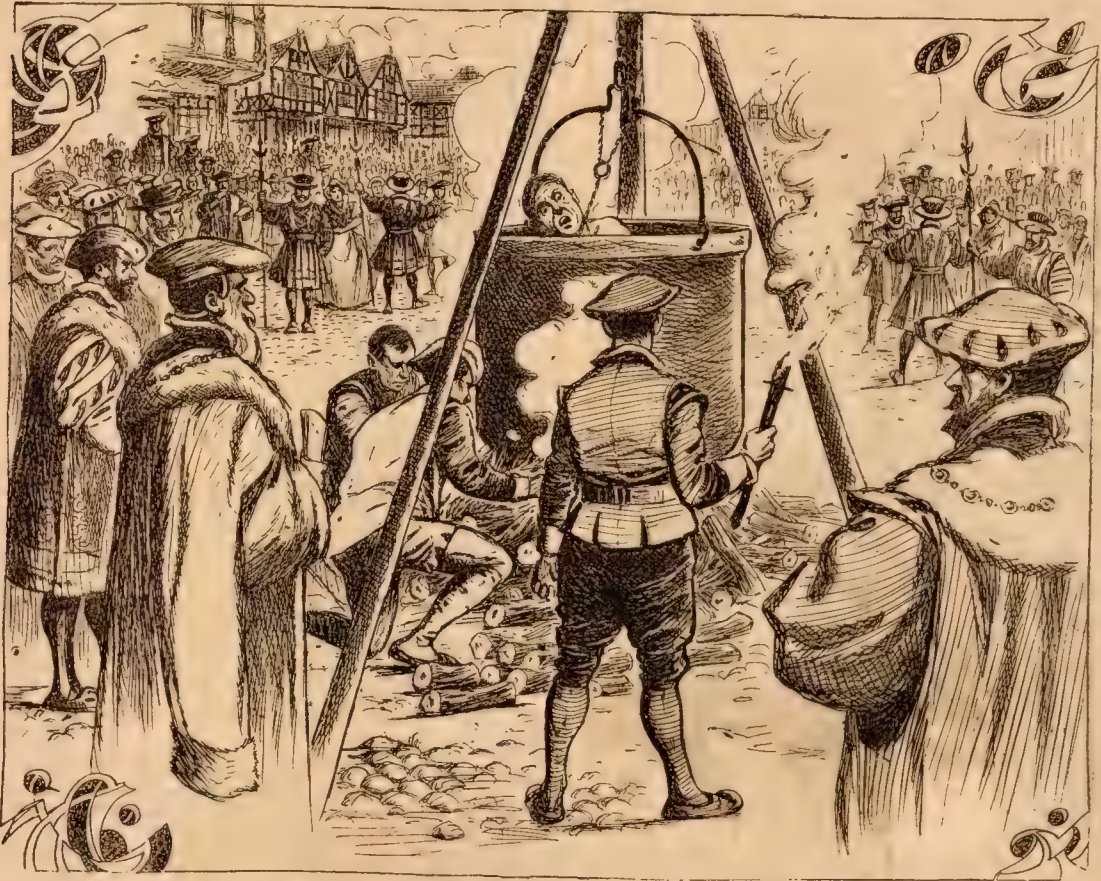
public profession of faith before they are either reconciled to the Church or handed over to the civil arm.

Before the archbishop's throne the carts are halted, and the wretched prisoners assisted to alight. Few of them can move a limb, for they have been racked and tortured by the Inquisitors to extort from them confessions of heresy, and incidentally to force them to disclose where their money is hidden.

One by one they are asked whether they recant of the heresy of which they have been accused. Several declare that they have not been guilty of infidelity, while others openly profess their repentance. These last are permitted to be reconciled to the Church, and, having been treated with great indignity, are sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment, accompanied by corporal punishment. These are handed over to the civil power for the due execution of their sentences. Those who have refused to admit that they have been guilty of heresy, or who have been adjudged to have committed

answer. Confession at this moment avails nothing, however, for once the victim has been "relaxed" to the magistracy for execution, the sentence is irrevocable.

Muttering a religious formula, the archbishop gives the signal, and fire is applied to the pyres. The flames leap up, licking the faces of the agonised wretches and heightening their pain. The air soon reeks with the odour of burning flesh. The executioners run hither and thither, armed with long forks, with which they heap up the faggots around the suffering victims. Now and then a shriek is heard, but for the most part the doomed suffer in silence. Around each burning pile hovers a priest striving to argue with the dying man until it is evident that unconsciousness has supervened. All the while the archbishop sits like one dazed, disgusted with the fearful tragedy which has been ordered by him. Bigotry, however, comes to his aid, and he comforts himself with the reflection that by his cruelty he has saved the immortal souls of the victims and assisted to stamp out heresy



BOILED TO DEATH IN THE DAYS OF "BLUFF KING HAL."

sins which can only be expiated by death, are then solemnly delivered to the magistrates, who are commanded to do execution on them forthwith.

Attended by a priest, each of the condemned is taken to a place apart for a short space, while the soldiery make ready for the execution. On the top of the stone stage are a number of sockets, and into these are placed iron stakes, one for each of the condemned. Round the foot of each stake a small staging of faggots is laid, and all is ready.

One by one the doomed men, dressed in their hideous "san benitos," and carrying lighted tapers, are forced to ascend the Quemadero and made to mount on to the top of the small stages of faggots.

A crucifix is placed in their hands, which are bound together, and they are then chained to the stakes. Faggots are next piled round them until they are as high as the victims' waists. A last time they are asked by the archbishop whether they repent, and a few say that they do, hoping thereby to save their lives. The others sullenly refuse to

in the land committed to his care. At last the executioners announce that the victims are all dead, and casting more faggots on the piles to consume the remains, they leave. Then the haughty prelate, saddened and dejected, returns to his palace, and the crowd goes back to the city. The first of the auto da fés is over. Thoroughly affrighted, the populace hopes that the Inquisition will rest for a time, and that no more heretics will be discovered. Their hopes, however, are in vain, for before 1481 had ended 298 persons perished on the Quemadero at Seville alone, while throughout the provinces of Castile and Cadiz two thousand were burnt by order of the Inquisition. It may be remarked that Manriquez was one of the mildest of Inquisitors, and it was not till his successor, Torquemada, came into power that the full force of the Inquisition was felt.

The Inquisition was not alone in ordering its enemies to be burned at the stake. During the reign of Good Queen Bess, the prelates of the Reformed Church of England were just as zealous in tormenting those who differed from them

in religious belief, and innumerable were the men who suffered under the "Virgin Queen's" sign manual.

In England there were two modifications introduced into the punishment of the State which went far to mitigate the sufferings of the condemned, for there can be little doubt that where the fire reaches the body slowly, as was the case in those who suffered under the *auto da fé* regulations, the agony was intense. These were the addition of gunpowder to the pile, and preliminary strangling.

The first mitigation of the penalty was most effective. A bag of gunpowder was suspended round the neck of the doomed person when he was attached to the stake, and when the flames reached this his torments were speedily ended. Sometimes the relations bribed the executioner, and as soon as he had lighted the outermost faggots he applied the torch to the gunpowder, thereby blowing the doomed man's head off. Strangling as a preliminary to burning was practised later on. Through the stake a hole was drilled, through which a rope was passed. This cord went round the neck of the culprit, and was so arranged that on pulling it it was constricted.

The faggots were lighted, and then the executioner caught hold of the cord and pulled with all his might, thus rapidly ending the tortures of the condemned. Occasionally, however, the fire caught the rope before strangulation was complete, and then the victim revived and was slowly burned to death. This, it will be remembered, happened in the case of Catherine Hayes, burnt for petit treason. Occasionally, too, the authorities were merciful, and to prevent an accident of that kind happening, ordered that the noose should be pulled tight and fastened before the fire was applied, the penalty thus becoming strangulation followed by cremation.

Faggots played a part, too, in the punishment which was meted out to the cook of the Bishop of Rochester in the reign of Henry VIII., one Rosse by name, who poisoned several people in 1531. Outside the Bishop's Palace a strong iron tripod was erected, and from this was suspended a vast pot partially filled with water. The poisoner was brought out before the excited populace, and his sentence read to him. He was to be boiled alive! Before he had time to beg for mercy he was stripped and trussed up like a fowl, and then thrust into the cauldron. His head was carefully kept out of the water, so that he should not be spared any sufferings. The fire was lighted, and the water gradually heated. At first the execution went off very tamely, but later the flesh began to get scalded where it touched the hot iron pot, and the cook commenced to scream. Gradually the water grew hotter and hotter, and the cook's suffering increased. His yells were pitiful to hear, but the people were so enraged against him that they would not ask for mercy for him. For two hours the wretched man suffered intense agony and then succumbed. His flesh was kept boiling till it separated from the bones, and the whole then cast into the sewers.

In 1542 a young woman named Margaret Davy was also boiled to death for poisoning. These two appear to be the only executions carried out by this barbarous method in England. The law making it legal to boil poisoners was repealed in 1547.

How Criminals are Identified.



THROUGH the courtesy of the authorities at Scotland Yard, a representative of FAMOUS CRIMES has been allowed to look over a number of volumes which explain the method by which the police are able to recognise the old offender and to produce proofs of his previous wrong-doing.

To start with, few people may be aware that there exists at the famous headquarters of detection in England a complete printing establishment. The compositors engaged at the "Yard" are thoroughly capable men, and their time is kept fully employed.

The police information sheets are of great importance in the day's routine, and are printed three times during the working hours, copies being sent to every division. They contain for the most part a description of lost and stolen property, information as to people who are missing from their homes, notices as to dead bodies found, and a list of worthies who are wanted and those who are safely in custody. These sheets are printed and issued like editions of the evening papers, the first being published at nine in the morning, the second at half-past twelve, and the "late extra," as it were,

at seven in the evening. This last issue does not, it is true, record "all the winners," like our pink contemporaries, but it gives the very latest list of arrivals at the prisons of the country, and all the tit-bits of police information up to the time of going to press. There is also a specially-enlarged weekly edition, giving a minute and detailed account of convicted criminals shortly to be discharged, and such information as may enable the police to keep them under observation during their time of freedom.

Of course, the great feature of this department of the "Yard" is the collection of criminal's portraits. Of these interesting souvenirs there are many thousands, and they are so indexed, ticketed, and arranged, as to enable any one of the authorities to discover a suspect's likeness—if such exists—at a moment's notice. At least four—and often six—portraits of a prisoner are taken. One of these is placed in the album devoted to the purpose, another goes to the division of the force where the offender was convicted, and the remainder are distributed amongst districts which the police regard as his old haunts. In many prisons the warders are themselves experts with the camera; but in the majority of cases the job is done by contract, and some local photographer undertakes the not too agreeable task of securing a picture of the unwilling Sikes, whose dislike to the process is vast and not unnatural.

The earliest of these curious counterfeits of the convict visage go back to the year 1862, and even those, taken by the old-fashioned process, are excellently preserved, though the great majority of those who sat for them have long since died. Often the subject struggles desperately to avoid being photographed, though he will silently submit to any other indignity, such as medical examination, measuring, etc., etc.

One of these albums contains no less than 4,500 photographs, and the shelves are filled with dozens of heavy volumes. We did not learn the exact total, but we understand that even ten years back there were 47,000 odd pictures of convicted offenders in this department of the metropolis of detection. The room, or library, is crowded all day long with members of the force, busily searching to find whether "Bill Jakes" or "Dick Slim" is amongst those who have compulsorily sat to the prison photographer.

No less than three of the printed books are devoted to the tattoo marks of criminals. Oddly enough—for a tattoo mark affords a sure and immediate means of identification—your criminal is very partial to this means of permanently disfiguring the human body, and he is often traced or identified in consequence. The tattoo marks make curious reading. Often they have been made when the criminal was young, and far from hardened to crime or inured to prison life. Many of them express quite pious sentiments, some quote from the Scriptures, and not a few are frankly immoral or irreverent. The marks are arranged in alphabetical order, and make up a weird medley indeed. One man—a very serious offender—has, or had, "I love Jane Bignell," tattooed on his breast, and another goes about, if he is still in the land of the living, with two hearts and the names of his two wives—"Mary, 1882; Lettice, 1889"—engraved round the fleshy part of his arm near the shoulder. Many words are tattooed in foreign languages, and others consist of some secret cypher which no man can understand. A tattoo mark consisting of a Spanish stiletto dripping with blood, and the words, "I did it," in a circle beneath, suggest unpleasant possibilities of secret crime.

We turn over the various pages, and select at random some striking entries which "give one pause." A notorious burglar has the words, "I never use violence," tattooed in violet ink upon his broad chest, and we suppose we must credit the assertion, though his record is rather the reverse of reassuring. "Jesus died for me" is tattooed on many a criminal chest, and one man went about with "Gone, but not forgotten," engraved on his thigh, with a beautiful ornamental border.

The tattoo marks are, for the most part, on the chest and arm, but there is also at Scotland Yard a very useful book, which gives the various designs found on the other parts of the body. By a glance through the pages of this green volume, one learns that parts of the human anatomy are sometimes chosen which one could not possibly consider as at all suitable to that particular purpose.

Women have never taken to the art of tattooing—outside the smart society which "Rita" girds at—and only a few feminine criminals have those marks of identification; but those that have have at least endeavoured to be original.

Of course the system of identification by the impression of the finger-tips is practically infallible, and has become more popular with those who look after the safety of our purses and our persons year by year.

.. THE .. Cry of the Blood

"..... Lo!
To my own gods I go,
Perhaps they will give me greater ease
Than your cold Christ and tangled trinitities."

—RUDYARD KIPLING.



THE savage is dying, if not already dead. One after another the elements of savagery are being submerged in the general spread of civilisation. The old idols are broken and defaced, the old tribes scattered and desolated; nothing maintains before the all-conquering cohorts of culture and thought. Like snow melting from the desert, the untutored peoples have stolen into the quiet-

ness of oblivion; their war drums are but an echo, their songs a remembrance. Under these circumstances,

it is interesting to observe the occasional revival of the old fires, the resurrection in the breast of man of elemental madness bursting all the traditional bonds of cultivated restraint. In such cases of reaction to primitive insanity the individual is bound to suffer; blood is almost certain to be shed and deeds of horror worked, for the old instincts return when they are re-aroused with redoubled violence.

The following history is an excellent exemplification of our meaning.

Twenty-five years ago, William Brown, a negro seaman, was esteemed by all as a peaceable, law-abiding citizen.

He was a tall, strongly-built man, handsome for one of his race, with large eyes, in whose depths there lingered a smile for everybody.

The son of Africa was renowned for the amiability of his temper; he had never been known to exhibit passion or violent tendencies in the course of his life.

"Will's a nice chap," one of his shipmates once remarked, "but as gentle as a baby. Bless yer, butter wouldn't melt in his mouth."

Of his childhood little or nothing is known; indeed, he himself knew little, and he shared in common with the rest of the world a complete and absolute ignorance as to his parentage.

Brown's first remembrance was a ship's cabin, with a lot of white faces standing over him. He was held in the arms of a black woman, and this may have been, for all we know, his mother. But the black woman soon faded out of his sight, and henceforth he had remained a coloured alien amidst the pale-faced races of the earth.

He had been a great traveller, for he was an able seaman with plenty of experience and resource, visiting America, Africa, Europe, Australia, and England.

After some years he made England his home; working on a line of British steamers that started from the Liverpool Docks, he made that town his headquarters. He was well known to many of the inhabitants, who one and all testified to his quiet manners and unobtrusive habits.

He was a constant frequenter of all sailors' haunts—the beerhouses and the little frowzy clubs down by docks. He was fond of playing cards; lost his money but never his temper, and so was invariably voted by the "sharks" a good fellow. All the sailors' sweethearts knew him, but he was

not intimate with any of them. The "trolls" that lurked in the "boozing kens" knew him also, fled to him sometimes for protection when rioting was in progress. Brown had the fist of an ox, and could stun any man with a single blow. Once he saved the lives of two Spaniards who were flying at each other with clasp-knives by quietly knocking them both down senseless. When they recovered consciousness, they were both sober, so the knives were put away.

Amongst the many women who frequented the dock haunts was a young widow, known to her familiars as Elizabeth.

Elizabeth may be described as a handsome woman. She might at an earlier date have laid claim to be called even beautiful, but she had dissipated the larger part of her good looks by the life she led.

She had a son by her dead husband, but he was seldom seen with her, preferring his own pursuits and companions to those of his mother.

Elizabeth first met Brown when he had just returned from a long voyage and when his pockets were full of money.

A friend of Elizabeth pointed the coloured man out to her.

"See that man, Lizzie?"

"What, the nigger? Yes."

"Well, his pockets be just bursting with coin. If you don't quarrel with his colour, you might live soft for a bit."

Elizabeth, who was not particular as to matters of race and breeding, was not slow to take the friendly hint.

In half an hour she had wheedled herself into the easy confidences of Brown. The two became inseparable.

"My dear Lizzie, just fancy you being struck with a nigger!" said a female friend, named Ann Besting, to Elizabeth.

"What, Will! He's the dearest old sort!"

"Got coin?"

"Runnin' over with it—never came across one so smart in all my natural!"

"He does go it flash."

"All on me, too."

"Well, I'm glad you've struck lucky—we all want it."



"See that man, Lizzie?"

"But, my dear, I ain't told you the best bit of it all."

"Go on, sling it out!"

"Well, last night he said to me, he said, 'Old girl, you've bin on your own long enough, and I reckon I've bin on my own long enough. Let's run double.'"

"Oh, Lizzie!—marriage?"

"Straight!"
 "What did yer say?"
 "Well, seein' as how he was a bit on, I say nothing."
 "Ah! they do talk queer in booze."
 "That's what I thought."
 "Think he means it?"
 "Soon see. I'll ask him to-day."

At that moment the swing-doors of the dirty little bar-room were flung open, and Brown walked in. He went straight up to Elizabeth and her companion.

"Well, old girl, thought over what I said last night?"
 "What do you mean?—about marriage?"

"Yes; it don't do you no good going on as you are. It don't do me no good. Let's splice and be comfortable."

There was no mistaking this offer, made in sober earnestness, in the presence of Ann Besting. Elizabeth did not have such opportunities in her path every day, and, although, perhaps, she would have preferred a husband with a white face, she contrived to remember the ancient adage which tells us that "handsome is as handsome does," and com-

being exhibited, and in half-amused curiosity Brown lingered to look at them. Inside the booth a showman began to beat upon a savage war-drum. The sound was monotonous and uninspiring. Brown stood enthralled. Where had he heard that magic sound before, so remote and yet so strangely familiar? The showman still beat the drum, and the weird notes, one after the other, unmusical and harsh, stirred the pulses of Brown's blood as they had never before been stirred in his life. Surely he had heard that before—somewhere, long ago, that magic sound had led him forth to battle. A great inclination to dance and sing rose up within him, a longing to fight and to vanquish.

Half-frightened, and strangely moved, he hurried away with new impulses roused within his breast. New impulses! No; rather the oldest impulses on earth waking after long sleep.

He went home quietly enough, but from that day he was never the same man.

He grew subject to melancholy fits, periods of abstraction and depression. Was he longing for the sea? No; a



DANCED MADLY ROUND THE BODY.

forted by this moral reflection, became Mrs. Brown the day after the proposal.

Long courtships were not fashionable in her circles of society.

Brown and his bride soon left their accustomed haunts, took a small, neat house, furnished it, and settled down to a life of connubial felicity. Elizabeth's son by a former marriage, now a young man, at first opposed all intercourse with Brown, on account of his nationality. The young fellow did not take kindly to a negro stepfather.

After a time, however, Brown's invariable good humour, pleasant manners, and generous heart, worked their way into the youth's affection. Finally, he voted his stepfather "a real good sort," and came to live in the house Brown and his mother had taken.

For some considerable period the expectations of continued and uninterrupted happiness were more than fulfilled. "All went merry as a marriage bell."

This, however, was but a prelude to the awful tragedy which resulted from the marriage.

One day Brown was alone walking in the country. Crossing some fields, he came upon a number of booths, around which all the humours of a small country fair were in progress.

At one end of the fair a troupe of "wild men" were

subtler, older, more powerful influence than the sea's call was moving in his heart. The long-silenced voices of savage forefathers, rude and barbaric, were calling their son through the calm of the ages.

Brown did not know this himself; all he recognised was the fact that a mighty and, to him, inexplicable change had come over him. He longed for action, but not the action of the sea. His present life oppressed him; the order, the commonplace method of civilised circles tortured his inherent wildness. He wished to be free, alone on vast tracts of uncultivated ground, free to roam, to hunt, and to slay.

At times he was astonished at the strange, dreadful thoughts which came sweeping through his brain. Once, as he sat by the fire in the little, well-ordered parlour, a terrible desire came over him. Elizabeth was asleep on the couch.

She awoke suddenly, and found Brown standing over her and as she had never seen him look before. He was trembling in every limb.

"My God, what's the matter, Will?"

"Nothing, nothing."

"You are ill!"

"No, no."

"I can see you are!"

"I tell you I'm well,"

He burst into a wild fit of laughter, and went hastily from the room.

That night Elizabeth confided to her son her belief that "Will" was going "a bit wrong in his head."

"Nonsense, mother!" replied the young man, and thought no more about the matter.

From that moment a terrible conflict was waging in Brown's breast, the old order wrestling in deadly battle with the new.

Custom, education, and habit combined in a great effort to repress the long-latent fire of primeval savagery. But the old dishonoured gods, broken, defaced, and forgotten as they were, the gods of his forefathers, the gods of blood, the hideous incarnations of the lust of killing, called their own and would not be denied.

He strove hard against them manfully and bravely; but how can one man battle with chance of victory against unnumbered generations of savage sires!

The spell of savagery was upon him; he grew more violent every day.

He felt that happiness was only to be reached through sacrifice. He longed to kill, to bathe his hands in the victim's blood, and to shout aloud the jubilant war song that had frightened the night-fowl on Africa's shore in the all dark, unwritten past.

Again and again the desire to slay swept over him. Vainly he struggled against the ghastly cohorts of his dead tribesmen; the curse indelible of his awful heritage. At last he surrendered. One night—the night of January 17, 1883—the dogs of desire mastered their prey.

He was lying quietly in bed by the side of his sleeping wife. Torment seized him, the blood of savagery surged in his veins and would no longer be denied. He became frenzied. The room was filled with the wild rhythm of dancing feet, spears, flashed in the gloom; fiendish faces peered out of the darkness, and all the while there sounded in his ears the strange, compelling music of the war drum.

"Kill, kill, kill!" cried the voices of the dead. "Slay, slay, slay! You are our slave, and subservient to our bidding."

The room swam round. He sprang to his feet with the wild whoop of savagery. Yes, he would kill! Blood was his birthright! He would claim it!

Aroused by his shouts, Elizabeth awoke in the darkness with a scream. Her husband was rushing round the room. She could see nothing, distinctly. With a yell of madness Brown sprang forward and seized the terrified woman. With one hand he grasped her by the throat, pinching it till she was nigh to suffocation, and the other he wound in the labyrinths of her hair. He dragged her, writhing in terror and bodily pain, from the bed down the stairs, laughing and shrieking in his insanity all the way. He reached the kitchen, and with the instinct of madness caught hold of the meat chopper and brought it down with savage strength upon the wretched woman's skull. Her brains were bespattered on the floor and wall.

A single gas-jet burnt dimly; he heightened it, and as in the increased light he beheld his sickening handiwork, the warm body of his wife, with the head like a blood-dripping sponge, he was seized with a horrible happiness. His eyes rolled in his head, foam stood out upon his lips, and his body twitched with frenzy.

Yelling like a fiend, he ignited some papers at the gas and threw them round the room. He caught up a huge can of paraffin, poured the oil over his wife's corpse, and on to the flames. The room flared up like a bonfire.

The savage danced madly round the body, singing the while strange gibberish and twisting his body into frenzied contortions. By this time the uproar had awakened the dead woman's son, who slept at the top of the house. Fearing that something wrong had happened, and wholly unable to explain the inexplicable noises which arose from the basement, he hurried on some clothes and hastened into his mother's bedroom. It was empty, but the bed had evidently been slept in. Now thoroughly alarmed, the young man sprang down the stairs. The passages were filling with smoke. On the threshold of the kitchen he reeled back in horror unspeakable.

The room was in flames. His mother's body lay near the door; her face had been beaten to pulp, and the fire was creeping up her limbs. Brown was dancing madly in the fire. The madman saw the youth, and, with a terrible yell, sprang upon him with an uplifted chopper in his hand. The young man closed with him.

A fearful struggle took place. Wildly the savage hacked at the air; again and again he attempted to fling his antagonist into the flames, but self-preservation lent his opponent

science. He was cool and wary. He had not the strength of Brown, but he had 'cute brains.

Seeing his opportunity, he stretched out his foot, and with a twist tripped the madman over on the dead body. He fell, writhing to the ground, with a scream. The young man fled from the house.

Once in the streets he shouted and shouted, until the neighbours were aroused and the police summoned.

A strong party entered the house. The fire in the kitchen had practically died out; the body of the dead woman lay as before, only charred and burnt almost beyond recognition.

Brown had flown.

Every room in the house was immediately searched, and one of the garrets was found to be locked. Horrible laughter was heard from within.

The hunters had run the prey to earth.

A strong detachment of police gathered on the landing to force open the door, whilst a number climbed on to the roof to prevent the murderer's escape through the egress of the skylight. He was summoned to surrender, but did not reply. A hammer was fetched, and with three heavy blows the door was burst open.

The police rushed in, to find Brown stretched on the floor, bleeding from the throat, and a razor by his side. It was soon seen that he was not dead, only seriously wounded.

Strongly guarded, he was carried from the house.

He recovered from his self-inflicted wounds to take his trial at the next assizes, before Mr. Justice Williams, when, on grounds of insanity, the jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty" to the charge of murder. He was sent to a criminal lunatic asylum for the remainder of his life.

We do not think of William Brown as a common maniac. In our own minds we are determined that inherent savagery, rather than inherent lunacy, moved him to the committal of his atrocious crime. The savage, conquered, quelled, and submerged in the tide of civilisation, loses his individuality, and the old instinct sleeps. But sleep is not death, and who shall say by what influences the sleeper shall awaken once more the savage and the slayer wading through sacrificial blood back to the gory altars of his old, dishonoured gods? The blood cries out: who shall deny the call?



Where He Stood.

"Did the prosecutor stand on the defensive, sir?" asked Mr. Curry of a witness in a case tried at Dublin in 1843.

To which Pat replied:

"No, begorra! He stood on the table!"

The Irishman's Ruse.

AN Irishman, who lived in the County Tipperary, went to the annual horse-fair at the last-named town, and, meeting a man with whom he had a slight acquaintance, and who had a horse to sell, agreed to purchase the animal for fifteen pounds. The would-be purchaser said to the seller: "I have only ten pounds on me, but I'll give you that, and be your debtor for the other five." "Right you are, me boy," replied the other, handing over the horse; and the two men parted. On the following day but one, the seller called for the other five pounds; but the buyer was equal to the occasion, and said: "No, sir; we must stick to our bargain. What we agreed on was this—that I should pay you ten pounds, and be your debtor for the rest. Now, how could I be your debtor if I were to go and pay you? It doesn't stand to reason at all, at all!"

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A Duel on Wimbledon Common.



TO convert oneself into a murderer in order to prove that one is a gentleman seems to us a very contradictory proceeding in these days, but in the early part of the last century it was almost an every-day occurrence, young bloods—ay, and old ones, too, for that matter—having recourse to pistols or swords on the very slightest provocation.

Did the Hon. John dispute with Lord Charles concerning the merits of a horse, the remedy was only to be found on the duelling ground; were two enamoured of the same fair damsel, the survivor of a bloody contest alone was worthy of her. For the fire-eater every little incident served as an excuse for picking a quarrel, followed by the inevitable duel. This being the custom in high life, it is but to be expected that Snips, the tailor, and his brothers of the counter were nothing loth to ape the manners of their betters—save the mark!—and, when opportunity served, put their personal courage to the test in secluded meadows or unfrequented spots. Generally these “second-rate” combats were attended with no more danger than are modern French duels, but the following

instance shows that occasionally serious consequences did ensue.

On the 21st of August, 1838, Mr. Gotobed, a respectable proctor, gave a little dinner at his residence in Great Russell Street, to Messrs. Eliot, Young and Webber, young sparks who followed no definite profession, but who derived their incomes from the successful trading of their sires. The dinner was good, and so was the wine, and the party sat till about eleven o'clock in the evening, chatting over the nuts and port. Then Messrs. Eliot and Young left, and shortly afterwards Mr. Webber rose to go, but Mr. Gotobed, belying his name, proposed that they should adjourn to the Saloon, in Piccadilly, and see a little life before retiring for the night. Webber agreed, and voting Gotobed “a gay old bird,” accompanied him to the famous night resort. To their astonishment, they found their two previous companions also in the Saloon, which was a place of assignation for the ladies of the town as well as a restaurant and drinking booth. Webber and Gotobed only stayed in the Saloon for a few minutes, and then retired, but Young and Eliot wandered about the bar for some while, chatting to the damsels who frequented the place.

Shortly after midnight Eliot saw a very beautiful young woman sitting alone at one of the tables, and he went up to her and soon was deep in conversation with her. Engaged in chatting, he did not notice the scowls of a tall, dark young man who had entered the Saloon some time after him, and who was regarding both him and his companion with anything but pleasure. Presently the stranger walked up to Eliot and insolently demanded what he was doing talking to the lady.

“That is none of your business,” replied Eliot.

“I’ll make it so,” returned the intruder. “That lady is my mistress.”

Eliot did not wait for further provocation, but struck the speaker across the face with his hand. “You will hear from me to-morrow!” hissed the stranger. “Where can I find you?” At that moment another man came up and entered into the quarrel, and, after high words, the party separated.

On the following day, at about noon, Eliot went to Fullard’s Hotel in Covent Garden, and there found Webber and Young having breakfast. He talked over the event of the previous night with them, and said that a Mr.



IT WAS CLEAR HE HAD BEEN SHOT IN THE CHEST.

Broughton had called on him on behalf of a Mr. Mirfin, the person whom he had struck, proposing a duel, and he had referred him to a personal friend, who was experienced in these matters. The fight was to take place that afternoon, and he would like Young and Webber to be present.

"Surely you're not going to fight Mirfin? He's only a hosier," said Webber. Eliot declared that it was too late to do anything else, and reminded his friends that they were only one degree removed from trade themselves, and they then consented to accompany him and "see the fun." For that purpose a hackney carriage and a cabriolet were ordered to be at the hotel at about four.

While Eliot was making his arrangements Mr. Broughton went to Dr. Scott, a surgeon, and told him about the coming duel, and asked him to come over to Mr. Mirfin's place and have some breakfast there. The doctor went, and Mirfin engaged him to come to the selected spot, in case his services were required. Scott got his box of instruments, and then Mirfin, Broughton and he went in a gig as far as the Elephant and Castle, where the surgeon got into a hired cab, and followed the gig at some little distance through Wandsworth and so up on to Wimbledon Common.

On reaching the windmill on the Common they found a couple of carriages already there, and Mr. Eliot introduced a stranger as his second, and said that Messrs. Webber and Young were friends of his who would also support him. Mirfin waited at the top of the hill, and Eliot, with the other gentlemen, went down a little valley together. The hosier had asked Dr. Scott to see that the pistols were fairly loaded, for Broughton was young and inexperienced, and so the doctor joined the seconds while this was being done. At that moment Scott noticed that Eliot was watching the proceedings, and, after speaking to the seconds, asked him to retire, which he did.

Then Broughton and the strange gentleman tossed up for choice of ground, and Broughton won. The site was selected, and the seconds, with the other gentlemen, stepped out a distance of twelve paces. The seconds again tossed for the privilege of loading the weapons, and Eliot's friend won the toss and set to work to charge the pistols, two pairs of which had been provided, under the close superintendence of Dr. Scott.

That done, Mirfin and Eliot were called down to the valley and placed in position, each receiving a pistol from his second. Scott stood with the seconds about eight paces from the principals, Young and Webber were a little farther off. Again the seconds tossed for the right to give the word to fire, and Eliot's friend gained the privilege. Seeing that all was ready, he exclaimed, "Gentlemen, are you ready? Stop!"—that being the arranged signal.

Immediately on the utterance of the word both pistols went off, and it was noticed that one ball had pierced Mr. Mirfin's hat, carrying a piece of the crown of it away.

The seconds rushed up to their principals and some conversation took place, Mr. Eliot saying that he was willing to give a verbal apology. Mirfin, however, was firm, and insisted on having another shot; in fact, to emphasise his desire, he shouted out several times, "I will have another shot. I insist on my rights!" That being so there was nothing to be done but to allow him to have his own way, and the seconds handed both the second pair of pistols. Again all retired and the word was given. Mr. Eliot was a little quicker than Mirfin on that occasion, and his shot struck the unfortunate hosier before the latter fired, causing his ball to strike the ground and do no harm. Then Mirfin was seen to totter and fall forward.

The doctor ran up and undid Mirfin's waistcoat, when it was clear that he had been shot in the chest. Eliot and his second and friends stood still, but Broughton went up to the doctor and asked, "What shall we do?" "Clear out as quickly as you can. This is a mortal wound!" was the reply, made sufficiently loud for all to hear. Eliot and his party then got into their carriages and drove off a short distance; then Eliot wanted to return, but Webber would not allow him to, and said that he would go himself and see what was the issue of the matter. This he did, and the duellist drove on, dropping his second at Hyde Park Corner and Young at Knightsbridge.

A little later Webber brought news to Eliot that Mirfin was dead, and that Broughton had fled to the Continent. On this the fire-eater made preparations to follow him.

As soon as the police got wind of the affair they went to the houses of the principal and seconds in order to arrest them all, but, not being able to find these, they took Young and Webber into custody. An inquest was held on poor Mirfin, and the coroner committed Young and Webber for trial on the charge of murder, and also issued warrants for

the arrest of Eliot and Broughton; the other second he could not touch, for no one knew his name.

In due time the two unlucky spectators of the duel were arraigned at the Old Bailey before Mr. Justice Vaughan and tried for their lives. Dr. Scott, the drivers of the carriages and the miller from Wimbledon Common were called to prove that a duel had taken place, and it was shown that both the prisoners were present, but that neither had taken any part at all in the affair, beyond looking on. However, they were found guilty and sentenced to death, a cruel sentence, which was afterwards commuted to one of imprisonment. Nothing was ever heard of either Broughton or Eliot, nor did the name of the mysterious second ever transpire.



They Were Much Better.

LORD KENYON, who was noted for his penuriousness, used to have his shoes very frequently soled and patched, and, when trying a case, lounged on the bench in such a manner that his foot-coverings were visible to the whole court, with their good qualities in the way of patches, etc., in full view of everybody in the place. An action for breach of contract to deliver shoes which were soundly made was being tried before him, and very much turned on the quality of the goods supplied. The judge, by way of clinching the witness, suddenly asked, "Were the shoes anything like these?" pointing to his own. To which the cobbler at once answered, "No, my lord, they were a good deal better and more genteeler." This produced a roar of laughter, in which the judge joined heartily.

Who is to Pay?

IN an old Scotch law-book which we have in our library, and which is called "The Book of Science," the following difficult case is given and solved: "If it happen that a man is passing along the King's highway driving before him two sheep fastened together, and meet a horse lying in the road with a wound in its back, and one of the sheep passes on one side of the horse and the other sheep on the other side, so that the rope rubs on the wound, and the horse rising up carries the sheep with it, until it reaches a mill, where there is a fire burning and nobody watching it, and it scatters the fire, and the whole mill, horse, sheep, and all are burned. Query: Who is to pay the damage? Answer: The owner of the horse shall pay for the sheep, because his horse should not have been lying in the highway; and the miller shall pay for the mill and horse, and for all other damage, because he left a fire in the mill without a keeper."

Suicide After Sentence.

THE tragic termination to the Whittaker Wright trial recalls to mind the names of other criminals who have preferred death to the terrible privation and seclusion of a gaol.

Barmash, the forger of bank-notes, a most ingenious scoundrel, was the immediate predecessor of the great financier in this respect. Sentenced to serve a long term of imprisonment, he anticipated matters by shooting himself in his cell very shortly after judgment had been passed upon him, and the world has not yet learnt how he was able to secrete a loaded revolver about his person.

The notorious political forger, Piggott, shot himself at the moment he was arrested at Madrid; and Redpath, a man of very much the same calibre, attempted to do the same thing.

John Williams, suspected of the murder of two families in the East-end of London in 1811, hanged himself in his cell by means of his braces before he could be brought to trial.

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A MODERN MARCHIONESS DE BRINVILLIERS.

Known as the BRIGHTON POISONING CASE.

"The venom clamours of a jealous woman,
Poison more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
At her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to life."

—SHAKESPEARE, "Comedy of Errors."



in self-destruction, with the possible ruination of that man, who must be classed as—should she be determined—her victim.

"Women are strange creatures," and once at least in the progress of life form a deep and indelible affection for a man, too often out of their reach, forbidden to them by the laws of society or by means of some accidental circumstance which make it impossible for her to realise her fondest hopes and her most ardent desires. But woman, "strange creature" that she is, never relinquishes her efforts to attain her object until every card has been played, until the knowledge comes to her that she has lost the game and has to throw up her hand.

Some are ready enough to realise the futility of the exercise of their captivating ways before it is too late; others persist in soaring again and again around the naked light, until their wings are singed and burnt, so that they can never rise again, caring as little for the agony they suffer as they do for the misery they are causing to others; oblivious of the inevitable damnation which is sure to await them as soon as their passions are gratified, or when they have fallen upon the path, bleeding at the heart and bruised in conscience, having failed to achieve their object.

Never in the whole annals of crime was this class of woman more perfectly pictured than in the Brighton poisoning case in the person of Miss Christiana Edmunds, who was tried at the Central Criminal Court, on January 15, 1872. Every means that can be conceived by the ingenuity of woman was used by her to bring about the result for which she played so desperate a game. She did not even stop short of murder, and the reckless destruction of innocent lives had no consideration with this woman.

Miss Edmunds, who was in the very prime of womanhood, being just over thirty and unmarried, became infatuated with a married man, and determined to win him for herself and to allow nothing to stand in her way to prevent her from achieving her purpose. She was full of animal passion, ripe in her womanhood, and determined in spirit.

One summer's evening in 1870 Christiana Edmunds was promenading on the "Front" at Brighton, where she had resided for a considerable period with her widowed mother, who was in very well-to-do circumstances, when she passed

a gentleman who was hurrying along as if upon urgent business. He did not pass her, however, so quickly that she was not able to glance at him. Their eyes met, and a thrill went through the lady's frame. There was something indescribably magnetic about his look, and the whole of that day she thought of nothing else but the good-looking gentleman who had passed her. For days his face haunted her, and she had a yearning to meet him again.

Christiana Edmunds was no giddy girl; she was a woman—but a very impressionable woman—of over thirty years of age, and so great an influence had this man made upon her that she determined not to rest until she had discovered who he was. His identity was to be revealed to her in an accidental manner. It usually is so; it is thus that our destinies are shaped. Walking with a lady friend one afternoon near the Pavilion, she observed the man, who had, as she believed and felt, hypnotised her coming towards them. She turned pale, and then the blood rushed to her face as he approached. To her delight and dismay he hesitated as he came near to the ladies, raised his hat, and passed on.

"Do you know that gentleman?" asked Christiana of her companion nervously.

"To be sure I do," was the prompt reply. "He is Dr. Beard, a well-known practitioner in Brighton. He has attended several of our friends, and is believed to be very clever."

"Oh, indeed," said Miss Edmunds carelessly, and changed the subject. But her friend remarked that Christiana spoke little during the remainder of the afternoon and seemed absent-minded. Her thoughts were with the handsome stranger, and she had fallen hopelessly in love with him at first sight. That night her mind was made up. At any cost she must meet him, touch his hand, perhaps his lips—who could tell? And the blood rushed through this woman's frame at the expectancy of such delight.

Next day she was in bed. "I am too unwell, mother, to be about to-day. My head is so bad, and I feel so feverish. If I am not better to-morrow I shall ask you to get some medical advice. I have taken a chill, and I feel that I am about to suffer a serious illness," said Christiana feebly. She was certainly flushed, but it was caused by the yearning for the man for whom she had taken such a fancy, and there was no chill about the case at all. On the contrary, it was a burning desire.

Of course, next day she was no better; still unable to leave her room. She insisted upon seeing a doctor, and would have none other than Dr. Beard, who had so successfully treated her friends.

And so the doctor came and diagnosed. Yes, the pulse beat quickly and the temperature was high. The face was as crimson as that of a patient in a high fever, and the eyes were bright and full of startling expression. He would visit her on the morrow. When he left Christiana burst into tears and sobbed with joy so much that she became hysterical. What a time it seemed to her that day and night, and she lay and listened for hours for that sharp knock that was to announce the arrival of the man whom she loved. Yes, there was a magnetism in her look that fastened on to the doctor, and he held her hand and wrist longer, much longer, than was necessary, and they spoke to each other with their eyes.

And so "this casual acquaintance," to use the moderate words of counsel, which were uttered later on, "ripened into an intimacy scarcely consistent with the strict relations that ought to exist between a medical adviser and one of his female patients."

Christiana Edmunds was soon herself again, and her meetings with Dr. Beard were frequent; some clandestine, others at his house, in the presence of his wife, to whom he had had the audacity to introduce his fair patient. And so the intimacy became closer and closer, whilst dust was cleverly thrown into the eyes of the doctor's wife.

No doubt to Dr. Beard all this meant nothing more than a somewhat dangerous liaison, which could be more or less readily cut short; but to Christiana Edmunds it meant more. Her extraordinary and sensitive nature caused this infatuation to develop into a most living flame, which fed upon yet not consumed itself. It was a terrible passion that had taken possession of her.

Then came the attendant demons—Jealousy and Hatred. She felt an uncontrollable longing to rid herself of the one who stood between her and the man she now felt was a part of her life, the man who must be hers and hers only. And then when he found the woman's passions so fiercely raging he became alarmed. He had never calculated upon such a development. In vain he appealed to her reason and pointed out the terrible consequences that were inevitable if she did

not control her feelings. She could not, had she cared to, and she did not. Finding that he feared a revelation and the anger of his wife and loss of his position, Christiana Edmunds determined to remove the obstacle which stood between her and her lover. She determined to murder her. For hours and hours she locked herself in her room and read his letters again and again, and wrote to him in such a manner that (as counsel mildly put it at the trial, which we shall presently refer to) proved that she "entertained the strongest feelings and expressed them in very strong language." So strong, indeed, that these letters were not read in court.

Towards the close of 1870 Miss Edmunds was on a visit to the Beards' house. The doctor was absent attending to his patients, and his mistress and the unsuspecting wife were together, the one playing the other false as women only can do to each other. Producing a box of chocolate creams, Miss Edmunds asked Mrs. Beard to take some. Immediately upon crushing one, she, with an expression of

passion when she arrived home. Her terrible feelings had caused her almost to lose her reason. Something must be done if the ingenuity and cunning of such a woman were equal to the occasion to divert that suspicion. Ay! to do more than that. Something must be effected to reinstate her with the Beards—to obtain for her the compassion, the sympathy, and, above all, the outlet for her passionate love. At all costs, at all risks, this must be accomplished.

And then Christiana Edmunds set about her devilish task, conceived in all its details by a brain which, with all its flaws and defects, had an activity truly marvellous. Her conduct from that moment became so extraordinary that it was said to be "totally unparalleled in the records of any criminal court of justice."

The woman bided her time, and her patience must have been wonderful. It was not until the June of 1871 that her plans were ripe, for it took her several months to prepare the way. In the March of the same year she visited Mr. Garrett, a well-known chemist in Brighton, and bought



"WHERE DID YOU GET THOSE BEASTLY THINGS?"

disgust, spat it out, exclaiming, "Why, where did you get those beastly things from?"

"Bought them in a shop in West Street," was the reply. "Why, what is the matter with them? I have eaten some." But Christiana Edmunds turned pale and trembled. The cream which she had offered to Mrs. Beard contained strychnine.

Whether the wife was clever enough to extract other chocolates from the box for analysis, or whether the relation of the circumstances to her husband caused him to suspect foul play, it was never known, but certain it is there was a cessation to the visits, and it may be presumed that there was an exceedingly stormy interview between Dr. Beard and the woman who had attempted to poison his wife. From that moment both shrank from the presence of and from further communication with Christiana Edmunds.

Now comes a chapter in this extraordinary story which to every sound mind must strike a thrill of horror. She had made a false step, and forfeited the affection—whatever it amounted to—of Dr. Beard. She was in his power and that of his wife. Her love-affair was paralysed and her reconciliation with Mrs. Beard was hopeless. How could she extricate herself from such a terrible situation? She was mad with

some materials for the toilette. At the same time she asked for a small quantity of strychnine, saying that she wanted it for the purpose of killing several cats, which had been causing a great nuisance in their garden. She gave the name of Wood, of Hill Side, Kingston, saying that she was a married woman, without children, so there was no danger in having the poison in the house, she and her husband alone having access to it. She was supplied with it on more than one occasion, and in as great a quantity as ten grains. Not satisfied with this, this modern Brinvilliers forged the signatures of Messrs. Glaisyer and Kemp, chemists, of North Street, Brighton, and obtained a greater supply of the deadly poison.

Now she was ready to work out her diabolical scheme. One afternoon, in June of 1871, she stopped a small boy, named Adam May, in Portland Street, and sent him to Maynard's sweetmeat shop, in West Street, for sixpennyworth of chocolate creams. When they were brought to her she expressed annoyance, saying that she had instructed him to bring small ones, although she had expressly told him to bring the large size. The lad was sent back with what purported to be the creams which he had brought, but this charming lady had "rung the changes," and had given him

some of precisely the same make, which had been previously purchased, and which she had operated upon by inserting some of the strychnine. The chocolates were accordingly changed, those containing the poison being thrown back into the case which contained the stock.

On more than one occasion she practised this awful and diabolical ruse, and it is easy to perceive her motive. That some poor innocent person would purchase the chocolates that had been tampered with was certain. That the result would be illness or death was also a natural consequence. Thus Christiana Edmunds would have the opportunity of shifting the responsibility of having administered a poison to Mrs. Beard upon Mr. Maynard, the confectioner, or the people who supplied the chocolate creams wholesale. This woman vainly thought that, such being accomplished, she would once again be on terms with the Beards and able to enjoy the presence of the man with whom she had become so madly infatuated.

But there was a net being thrown over her. The young woman, Kate Page, who served in Mr. Maynard's shop, had her suspicions aroused, and felt confident that something was wrong when on several occasions boys returned with these chocolate creams to have them exchanged, so she had one of them followed, with the result that Edmunds was seen to receive them.

Besides the boy May there was another lad, named Brooks, and a third, named Tyler, who had been sent for the sweets by Edmunds, and on all occasions they had been sent back to exchange them. This was all very mysterious, but the real object was not suspected.

However, before long the thunderbolt was to fall about this woman's head, and it was brought about in a most cruel and startling manner. A dear little fellow of the tender age of four, named Sidney Barker, was staying in Brighton, and his father's brother-in-law, Mr. Miller, purchased some chocolate creams at the shop of Mr. Maynard. The child, having eaten some, became very sick and giddy, and in twenty minutes was dead. Miller ate some himself, and felt a dizziness, and had a coppery taste in the mouth. The chocolates which remained were thrown away, but others were purchased at Maynard's and handed over to Inspector Gibbs, who sent them to Professor Lethly for analysis, that gentleman discovering in one of the creams sufficient to kill an adult. Even then there was no suspicion that Edmunds was the prime mover in this dreadful attempt upon the lives of the innocent, and at the inquest upon the little fellow the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death." Maynard's stock was analysed, a considerable amount of sweets were found tampered with, and the whole stock of the establishment was ordered to be destroyed.

This was in August, at which time Christiana Edmunds commenced writing a series of anonymous letters to Albert Barker, father to the boy who had been poisoned, urging him to prosecute Maynard, evidently being anxious to fix the responsibility upon him and release herself from the estrangement of the doctor and his wife, which had now lasted a considerable time. Inspector Gibbs wrote a note inquiring about some simple matter, and received a reply by letter. He immediately discovered that the writing of Edmunds was that of the person who had written the anonymous letters, and suspicion was, of course, aroused.

Events moved quickly, and in the end Christiana Edmunds was arrested and charged with the murder of the child Sidney Barker. We will not dwell upon the details connected with the police court proceedings. Let it suffice to say that the case created the greatest excitement throughout the whole of the country, and the woman was committed for trial. This took place at the Central Criminal Court, for certain reasons it being thought necessary to remove the woman from Lewes Gaol to Newgate.

January 15, 1872, was the day fixed, and Baron Marten was to try the case. Many learned counsel who afterwards became famous were interested in this remarkable trial. Mr. Serjeant Ballantine and Mr. Straight were retained for the prosecution, whilst Serjeant Parry, Mr. Worsley, and Mr. Poland were for the defence. The Old Bailey was crowded with barristers and their friends, and upon the bench were some well-known people, whilst the public crowded into the court and blocked the street from Holborn to Ludgate Hill.

Nobody doubted her guilt, that was obvious before she was committed for trial; but the rumour was that Edmunds was insane, and that on those grounds she might be acquitted. Let us, then, enter the old and stuffy Criminal Court, within whose walls so many remarkable trials have taken place, and we shall form an opinion as to her insanity.

As the clock strikes ten the jury previously summoned are

ordered into the box. An usher shouts "Silence!" and the empty bench fills with ermine, gold chains, and frills. Mr. Baron Marten leads the way, followed by Sheriff Truscott, with Aldermen and Under-Sheriffs Beard and Crossley bringing up the rear. In the bustle of the official entry it is hardly noticed that the dock likewise receives its occupant, in the shape of a woman attired in black velvet, trimmed with fur. She is followed by a very hard-faced female warder and a male gaoler.

There is a slight rustle, and then a pronounced silence as the Clerk of the Court reads the indictment accusing this demure, quiet-eyed woman of "wilful murder," in having caused the death of the boy Sidney Albert Barker, by poisoning.

And now the demure, quiet-eyed woman glances up slowly, and in a low but firm voice says, "Not guilty." She cares not to challenge the jury, and Serjeant Ballantine, who is prosecuting for the Treasury, rises and begins his address. He speaks in a low, subdued voice, and makes no effort by



She sent the lad back.

means of gesticulations to emphasise. The prisoner at the bar is the centre of attraction, and few regard counsel, but, whilst listening to his words, attentively turn their faces to Christiana Edmunds, who stands alone behind the breast-high oaken front of the dock with a self-possession so remarkable that she must be very hardened in crime or incapable through mental weakness of regarding her terrible position. There is not a perceptible blush or tremor as she stands there in her solitude. She looks straight to the front, once carrying her scrutinising inspection round the court, dwelling specially in her gaze as it travels to the benches on which sit the lady spectators.

Now there is a slight raising of the brows and a sudden, quick flash of the dark eyes as she recognises some face amongst these which is familiar to her on the Brighton "Front." Now she seats herself, and her face and head alone are visible over the panel before her.

Serjeant Ballantine has scarcely commenced his speech when it is evident that she is taking most copious notes. The delicately-gloved hand now and again conveys the pen to the ink before her, and she is busily writing, showing not the

slightest symptoms of insanity. On the contrary, she appears as calm and as much in possession of her faculties as anybody there.

It will be unnecessary to recount the whole of the evidence, the purport of which has already been given. Serjeant Ballantine gave a very clear outline of the case for the prosecution, and said:

"I believe I have now correctly stated the broad facts of this case, and I trust that not one word has escaped my lips that will cast on the prisoner at the bar an unfair or improper prejudice. The time has long elapsed in my career when I could feel it any victory in any criminal case to obtain the conviction of a prisoner. I hope you will consider I feel it my duty to endeavour earnestly to assist in the administration of justice, and to assist, as far as I can, in arriving at the truth; and I am sure that, fearful as the issue is, you will not shrink from it. At the same time, gentlemen, I cannot grudge you the gratification, if you have a doubt, of giving the prisoner the benefit of it."

Mr. Serjeant Parry depended upon proof of insanity to save the woman's life, and called witnesses to show that she was of unsound mind and not answerable for her actions, declaring that their statements proved she was "saturated with hereditary insanity."

"God knows," said the learned serjeant, "whether the wretched woman at the bar is suffering from insanity. It is for the jury to say whether she is or is not; but I entreat you to remember she is one whose father, whose brother, whose sister all had died in a state of insanity. That being the fact I entreat you to find the prisoner innocent of the crime with which she stands charged."

Sergeant Ballantine replied mildly, and his lordship summed up and pointed out that the antecedents of the prisoner pointed to an unsound mind. The prisoner's father went raving mad at the very age she had reached, and died in an asylum; her mother's father died imbecile from paralysis; her brother died an epileptic idiot at Earlswood; her sister suffered from hysteria and partial paralysis; and she was at an age when abnormal symptoms are likely to show themselves. But the judge also pointed out that there was much method in her madness.

The jury retired at ten minutes to four o'clock, and did not come back until ten minutes past five, and were asked by the Clerk of Arraignment:

"Have you all agreed to your verdict?"

"Yes," replied the foreman.

"Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?" was demanded.

"Guilty!" And there was a death-like hush in the court. But the prisoner was unaffected. She quietly turned to the judge and said, "I wish to be tried on the other charge brought against me, and I want my whole connection with Dr. Beard gone into. It is owing to the treatment that I have received from Dr. Beard that I have been brought into this trouble."

The judge then said in a kind voice, "I am not at all disposed to disbelieve you; but it simply goes to confirm the truth and justice of this verdict. I am satisfied that since you became acquainted with Dr. Beard you turned your attention to the poisoning of these innocents. I have one duty to perform."

And then, amidst breathless silence, the judge passed sentence of death in the usual way. This was afterwards commuted to imprisonment during her Majesty's pleasure, and the woman, sane or insane, who had caused so much sensation and misery to the home of her poor little victim soon passed out of the minds of the general public, although the name of Christiana Edmunds will for many years to come be associated with Brighton and the great poisoning case.

Seaman as Bill Sikes.

WILL SIKES's fictional attempt at escape, after the magnificently-described murder of Nancy, has its counterpart in real life.

Most of our readers will remember the frightful murder of Mr. Levi and his housekeeper, in Leman Street, Whitechapel by a miscreant named Seaman in the spring of 1836. This man, who had secreted himself on the premises in order to effect this deed, found the house surrounded before he could escape from it, and in his desperation he jumped from the roof and fell insensible among the crowd.

It may not be generally known that a mongrel dog, which had followed his master, the murderer, to the ill-fated house, and had remained waiting for him outside, at once rushed to the body, and was with the utmost difficulty driven away.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

The Mansfield Murder.

A VERY brutal, because entirely motiveless, murderer was Charles Rotherham, of Sheffield, who was arraigned at the County Hall, Nottingham, before the Hon. Sir John Bayley on a charge of wilfully murdering a young woman named Elizabeth Shepherd, on July 7, 1817.

It transpired in evidence that the deceased left her mother's house at Papplewick between twelve and one at noon, for the purpose of going to Mansfield to seek for a place in service. At six o'clock she was seen to leave the latter place on her return home, but never reached her destination, and early the next morning her body was found in a ditch by the roadside, about fifty or sixty yards to the south of the third milestone. Her skull was terribly fractured, and a large hedge-stake lay near the body, about a foot and a-half from her head. This deadly instrument was produced in court, and, being nearly five feet in length and clotted with blood at the upper end, a thrill of horror at the sight ran through the spectators. The victim, a very finely-formed young woman, was only seventeen.

The poor girl's shoes and umbrella were found in the possession of the prisoner, who was seen offering them for sale while tramping to Loughborough, at which place he was apprehended. He was taken to Sutton-in-Ashfield, in order to attend the inquest, and when passing the spot where the deed was perpetrated he made a full confession of his guilt. He stated that he could not tell what possessed him at the moment; but that the instant he overtook the girl he struck her on the head, and repeated the blows till she was lifeless.

Being, of course, found guilty, this brutal miscreant was hanged on July 28, 1817, at Gallows Hill, in the presence of a great crowd. To perpetuate the recollection of this tragedy, the late Mr. Antony Buckles and other gentlemen of Mansfield erected a stone on the site of its occurrence. It bore the following inscription, and may still be in existence for anything we know to the contrary:

"This stone was erected in memory of Elizabeth Shepherd, of Papplewick, who was murdered by Charles Rotherham near this place on July 7, 1817; aged 17 years."

Montagu Place.

A GREAT portion of Montagu Place, Bedford Square, is shortly to be absorbed by the British Museum.

It may not be generally known that at a certain house on the north side of this fine, spacious thoroughfare a terrible crime was committed very many years ago. A housekeeper, named Elizabeth Jeffs, or Jeffe, was discovered barbarously murdered, and a young man, named Jones, son of a well-known literary man, was arrested and tried for the crime.

The evidence against him was fairly strong, but he was found "Not guilty," and the real perpetrator has never been discovered.

The New Year.

A MURDERER, who must have possessed some modicum of humour, was sentenced to be hanged, and was warned to prepare to meet his fate on January 1. He took the announcement calmly enough, and it is recorded that all he said when the hangman entered his cell for the purpose of pinioning him was:

"Well, this is a nice way of beginning the New Year, I must say!"



A CONSTANT READER.—Published.

E. B. C.—Case will appear in due course.

CONSTANT READER (Bristol).—Hope to publish them soon.

ALFRED THOMAS.—The stories of crimes you mention will all appear.

MARY JOHNS.—There is no record of this incident in the life of your grand-daughter.

DICK TURPIN.—(1) Full story appeared in an early issue. (2) Neither. (3) We will publish it shortly.

JAMES THOMPSON.—We cannot help you as to the game of "Banker." Thanks for offer. We may publish it later.

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